Current Anecdotes

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Evangelistic Search-Lights.

SELECTED BY THE EDITOR.

SEEKING THE LOST. (194)

Luke 15: 4; Ezek. 34: 11, 12.

Major Whittle told a story of an old Quaker named Hartman, whose son had enlisted in the army. There was a dreadful battle, and this old father started to the scene of conflict to learn something concerning his boy. The officer of the day told him that he had not answered to his name and that there was every reason to believe that he was dead. This did not satisfy the old Quaker, and so he started across the battlefield, looking for the one who was dearer to him than life. He stooped down to turn over the face of this one and then the face of another. The night came on, and then with a lantern he continued his search, all to no purpose. Suddenly the wind, which was blowing a gale, extinguished his lantern, and he stood there in the darkness, hardly knowing what to do until his fatherly ingenuity, strength and affection prompted him to call out his son's name, and so he stood and shouted, "John Hartman, thy father calleth thee."

All about him he could hear the groans of the dying, and some one saying, "Oh, if that were only my father!" He continued his cry with more pathos and power, until at last in the distance he heard his boy's voice crying tremblingly, "Here, Father." The old man made his way across the field shouting out, "Thank God, thank God!" Taking him in his arms he bore him to headquarters, nursed him back to health and strength, and he lives today.

Over the battlefield of the slain this day walks Jesus Christ, the Son of God, searching for his lost, neglected children.

LIFT THE LATCH. (195)

Rev. 3: 20; Luke 12: 36.

"I was visiting," said Arnot, "among my people in the wynds and closes of Edinburg. I stood away back, and looked up at the high houses to see whether Betty Gordon, an aged saint of God, was at home. I knew that she was at home by this sign; that her little flowerpots were out upon her window sill, that the blind was up. I knew Betty was in, for when she went away she carefully took in the flowerpots and pulled down the blinds.

"I knew that she was poor and needy, but she trusted God, and I was so glad that somebody had given me some money that morning to give to the poor. I put aside Betty's rent for a month in my pocket and went into the close, climbed up the winding stone stairs to Betty's door; I knocked. At first I knocked softly, but there was no answer. Then I pulled the bell, but there was no answer. Then I knocked louder, but there was no answer. At last I said, "Betty forgot to pull down the blinds, and she has gone out, leaving her flowerpots there. What a pity!" Then I went down the stairs.

"The next morning I went back and knocked at the door. After a little waiting Betty came and opened it.

" 'Oh,' she said, 'is it you, Mr. Arnot? I am so glad to see you! Come in!' There were tears in her eyes, and a look of care.

"I said, 'Betty, woman, what are you crying for?' 'Oh,' she said, 'Mr. Arnot, I am so afraid, I am so afraid of the landlord. He came yesterday and I had na the rent, and I dinna open the door, and now I am afraid of his coming; for he is a hard man.' 'Betty, what time did he come yesterday?' 'He came between eleven and twelve o'clock,' she said. 'It was twenty-five minutes to twelve.'

" 'Well,' I said, 'it was na the landlord; it was I, and I brought to you, Betty, this money to pay your rent.

"She looked at me, and said, 'Oh, was it you? Did you bring me that money to pay my rent, and I kept the door shut against you, and I would not let you in? And I heard you knocking, and I heard your ringing, and I said, That is the landlord; I wish he would go away. And it was my ain meenister. It was my ain Lord who had sent ye as his messenger, and I would na let ye in.' "

That is just like some sinners. When Jesus is knocking at their hearts they treat him as if he were a hard landlord and will not let him in. Oh, let me beseech of you, receive the Savior.

PROPOSAL TO ALL HONEST DOUBTERS. (196)

John 5: 39; Acts 17: 11; John 7: 17.

"I believe in the absolute difference between Right and Wrong. I promise honestly to seek to know what is right, and follow the light wherever it leads me; to examine carefully the evidence that the Bible is God's book and Jesus Christ is God's Son and

man's Savior; and if I find reason to believe that this book is true and he is man's Savior, I will accept him and confess him before men and undertake to follow him," Will you sign this covenant?—R. A. Torrey.

THE MAN AND THE FIRE ESCAPE. (197)

Matt. 6: 33; Deut. 4: 29.

The truth that Christ is the Son of God who has died for our salvation, is the heart of the Gospel. And why should we make our faith in that, and our living by it, contingent on the clearing up of certain external and secondary questions; chronological, historical, critical, philological, scientific and the like? And why should men be so jangled about the latter as that the towering supremacy, the absolute independence of the former should be lost sight of?

What would you think of a man in a fire who, when they brought the fire escape to him, said, "I decline to trust myself to it until you first of all explain to me the principles of its construction; and, secondly, tell me all about who made it; and, thirdly, inform we where all the materials of which it is made came from?" But that is very much what a number of people are doing today in reference to the Gospel of our salvation when they demand that the small questions—on which the central verity does not at all depend—shall be answered and settled before they cast themselves upon that.—Ian Maclaren.

A HOUSE CLOSED FOR FORTY YEARS. (198)

Josh. 24: 15; Deut. 30: 19.

The doors of a mansion in South Carolina were opened recently, which had been closed ever since the war. When the war broke out the owner of the mansion was a graduate of West Point and held a commission in the army. But though a Southerner by birth, and the descendant of men whose names were illustrious in Southern history, his associations had been with the North, and he had married a lady of a famous New York family. Naturally, she was loyal to the Union, but her husband could not bring himself to make war upon the State in which he was born, and in whose history his forefathers had written their names. When it became necessary for the young officer to make a final choice, he resigned his commission in the army, and so expatriated himself. He had no intention of quitting the United States for all time, and so he closed his home in Charleston without removing the furniture. The house was not opened again until more than forty years later, when the old furniture was found still in place, dust-covered and falling into decay. He had wandered about Europe listless and despondent, feeling that he ought to have taken part in the struggle on one side or the other. He felt ashamed of the course he had taken, and gradually fell into a condition of melancholy, from which he never recovered. After his death, his widow could not bear to return, and now she is also dead, and the deserted house has been opened by the heirs. It had been a sad and sorrowful life for the man who could not bring himself to take either side in the trouble. How many there are who are thus wrecking their lives by indecision in spiritual matters, not enjoying the world, yet not coming out openly for Christ, and the end is still more deplorable.

A GLIMPSE OF HER SAVIOR. (199)

Isa. 53: 3-6; Jer. 29: 13.

The Rev. Maltbie D. Babcock told of the day when Harry Morehouse, the celebrated evangelist, was a guest in his father's house. He was in his room, waiting for the time of the service, when he heard the door open, and, looking about, saw it close quickly again. He turned to his Bible, and heard the same thing repeated; and then, without turning, he said: "Come in," and there entered one of the children of the household, who had seen so much of Christ in the face of the preacher that she desired to know him, and she said, "Mr. Morehouse, I should like to be a Christian."

"Well," said he, in his quiet, gentle way, "you may." And he said: "Will you please turn to the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and read it, making it personal to yourself? Whenever the pronouns are general make them personal."

She began: "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when I shall see him, there is no beauty that I should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and I hid as it were my face from him; he was despised, and I esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne my griefs, and carried my sorrows; yet I did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted."

When she had read thus far, she stopped, and Harry Morehouse said: "Go on and read it."

"But he was wounded for my transgressions; he was bruised for my iniquities; the chastisement of my peace was upon him; and with his stripes I am healed."

She could not read any further for her tears, but she had caught a glimpse of her Savior in this reading, and Harry Morehouse said to her: "This is all we need to do to be saved—to lay hold upon him by faith, of whom Isaiah speaks."

SEND WORD AHEAD. (200)

John 14: 2; Luke 10: 20.

Some years ago my wife and I were traveling through Connecticut.

We arrived in Birmingham one evening, after dark, and went to the hotel where I was acquainted. The clerk informed us that there was no room, the house was full.

Pleading nor acquaintance counted for anything, and with the words ringing in our ears, "Why didn't you send word you were coming and we would have had a place for you," we turned away to seek accommodations elsewhere.

There were happy people all about us. Each had a place in that house but there was none for us. They had sent word, we had not

And thus it is with the Christian. He is sending ahead word that he is coming so that a place will be prepared for him, otherwise when he "gets up yonder, he may find that the house is full."—By Evangelist C. F. Ladd.

REJECTING THE GOSPEL. (201)

2 Thess. 1:8, 9; Heb. 2:3.

An old legend tells that Saint Macarius, who dwelt among the tombs, one day took up a skull, and looked at it, and said to it: "Who are you?" The skull took a voice and replied: "I am a Pagan." Again the saint looked at it, and asked a further question: "Where are you?" Came the reply: "In hell." "How deep is hell?" went on the saint. "Deeper than earth is from heaven." "Are there any deeper in hell than you?" "Yes." said the skull, "the Jews are deeper in hell than I am." "Are there any deeper in hell than the Jews?" "Yes," said the skull; "there is a deeper depth yet. There are those that listened to the Gospel and obeyed it not."

GRATITUDE. (202)

2 Cor. 5:14, 15; Rom. 12:1.

Don Jesus Pico had been once taken prisoner by Fremont in California, and released on parole; when he was again captured at the head of the Californians, he was brought before a court martial and sentenced to be shot. The soldiers were drawn up in the plaza.

At the last moment a lady in black and a group of children came to the room of General Fremont, the windows of which looked upon the place of execution. It was the wife of Pico, who came to entreat for the life of her husband. After listening to her, Fremont sent for Pico.

He came in, with the gray face of a man expecting death, but calm and brave while feeling it so near. He was a handsome man, within a few years of forty.

Fremont pointed through the window to the troops paraded in the square. He knew why they were there.

"You were about to die," said Fremont, "but your wife has saved you. Go and thank her."

He fell on his knees, made on his fingers the sign of the cross.

"I was to die," he said, "I had lost the life God gave me—you have given me another life. I devote the new life to you."

He did it faithfully. He accompanied Fremont on his march south, and remained with him until he left California.—*Youth's Companion.*

GOD SEEKS US. (203)

Luke 15:4; Matt. 11:28.

Christ loves to save. Robertson, of Brighton, once wrote to his brother, "For many years I have been seeking God; but I have just been awakened to the fact that all these years God has been seeking me."

FOR THE NEEDY. (204)

Isa. 55:1; 1 Tim. 1:12-15.

Among the children who were being examined to ascertain their fitness to be the guests of the Fresh-Air Home, was a very poor little girl in a faded, ragged gown. Her face was thin and pale.

"Have you a father?" she was asked.

"No," replied the child.

"Have you a mother?"

"No."

"Did you ever see the country?"

"No," came the timid answer.

"Did you ever see green grass?"

"Yes, in the park."

"Have you ever seen a daisy?"

"No mum; I don't know what a daisy is."

"Have you brothers or sisters?"

"No, I haven't nothin', an' I never had nothin'. Oh, I know I can't go to the country," said the poor little creature, now sobbing bitterly.

"You are the very one that the Fresh-Air Fund is for," was the comforting assurance. "It is expressly for such as you. You shall go to the country; you shall head the procession. The Fresh-Air Home is just for those who have nothing."

And so it is with the free salvation offered in the Gospel. It is for those who "have nothing." Christ gives a free passage to the Home he has gone to prepare. All the fitness he requires is to feel your need of him. If you feel that you "have nothing," "Come buy wine and milk" and Gospel grace, without money and without price. The poorest, the most needy can come to the blessed Saviour, who gave his life to purchase salvation for all who would accept it.—*Christian Herald.*

POWER OF CHRISTIANITY. (205)

John 7:38; 2 Cor. 4:17.

The story is told of a western farmer, who was startled to find, after a storm, that the lightning had struck the cistern in his cellar, and emptied it of water. But a gurgling sound revealed the fact that the same stroke of lightning had split a rock, and opened the way to a hidden flowing stream. He was glad to remove the debris of his cistern that he might get the supply from the neverceasing fountain. That is the way Christianity turns the world upside down. It may destroy the poor, temporary cisterns of the world's pleasure, but it leaves in their place the fountain of living water, where, if we will drink, we shall thirst no more.—Ex.

CHOICE OF THE WRONG. (206)

Gen. 6:3; Eph. 4:30; Isa. 63:10.

Thomas Marshall, the eminent statesman of Kentucky of a generation or more ago, was, in early life, greatly moved by the power of God to become a Christian. He debated the matter. It seemed to him that if he should become a Christian he must become a minister of the Gospel and this he was determined he would not do, as he was determined upon the law and political success.

One night he was in a prayer meeting. An earnest prayer was being made, and he felt that if he remained until its conclusion he must yield. Determined that he would not yield, he seized his hat and rushed out of the room. Never after that did he have an impulse to become a Christian, but he went on in a life in which he had some worldly success, but in which he destroyed himself in a course of dissipation.

Aaron Burr, one of the brightest and worst men who ever lived, tells us that when he was

about nineteen years of age he saw that a decision must be made between the world and God. He went into the country for a week to consider the matter. He then made a resolution never again to trouble himself about his soul's salvation. From this time he threw himself recklessly into sin, sinking lower and lower in depravity and unrighteousness.

IS YOUR SOUL FOR SALE? (207)

Mark 8:37.

A number of young men were sitting together in a country store one evening telling what they did not believe, and what they were not afraid to do. Finally the leader in the group remarked that, so far as he was concerned, he would be willing at any time to sign away all his interest in Christ for a five dollar bill.

"What did I understand you to say?" asked an old farmer, who happened to be in the store, and who had overheard the remark. "I said that for five dollars I would sign away all my interest in Christ; and so I will." The old farmer who had learned to know the human heart pretty well, drew out his leather wallet, took therefrom a five-dollar bill, and put it in the storekeeper's hand. Then calling for ink and paper, he said, "My young friend, if you will just step to the desk now, and write as I direct, the money is yours." The young man took the pen and began. "In the presence of these witnesses, I, A—— B——, for the sum of five dollars received, do now once for all and forever sign away all my interest"—Then he dropped the pen, and with a forced smile said, "I take it back; I was only fooling." That young man did not dare to sign that paper. Why? He knew that there was a God. He really believed in religion. And so do you, reader. Notwithstanding your apparent indifference, your trifling conduct, your boasting speech, you would not today for ten thousand dollars sign away, if such a thing were possible, your interest in Jesus Christ.

GOOD MONEY REJECTED. (208)

Isa. 55:1; Rom. 8:32; 1 Tim. 2:4.

A singular spectacle was witnessed on Broadway, New York, a few days ago. It was that of a man offering money to people who refused it. Some months ago a hard-working man became somewhat eccentric, but his whims were regarded as harmless. He conceived the idea of giving the children of the streets a treat. He asked his employers to save for him all the bright pennies they had. He said he meant to distribute them to the boys at Christmas. The idea took hold of him, and he talked a good deal about the fun he would have, and the delight the boys would have in scrambling for them. He dwelt on the notion until it took a wilder shape. He resolved to give all his savings away, and he could not wait for Christmas. Going on to Broadway he took a twenty-dollar bill from his pocket and offered it to a well-dressed man whom he met. The man brushed him aside, as did another to whom he offered it. He tried several others, but no one would take it. "It is good money," he shouted, "take it. I don't want it. Life is a good joke and I want my fun." People laughed at him, and a crowd of boys jeered him. The man grew more and more excited. "If you will not take it as a gift" he said, "will you buy it?" He offered good $10 bills for a quarter, and twenties for half a dollar; but no one accepted his offer. Finally, the police noticing the crowd took care of him and much to his exasperation locked him up till an inquiry could be made as to his sanity. It is scarcely credible that in this day, when money is so passionately desired, a man could not get people to accept it as a free gift. It is, however, a fact, and the only way of explaining it is that those to whom he offered it could not believe it to be true. The same doubt keeps many from a much greater blessing. The free offer of salvation is inconceivable to them.—*Christian Herald.*

GOD'S MESSAGE. (209)

1 Pet. 1:18, 19; 1 Tim. 2:6; Matt. 20:28.

A Swedish lad, in spite of his mother's pleadings, ran away from home and went to sea. He was captured by a Moorish pirate and sold into slavery in North Africa. As he toiled under a blazing sun he thought of his mother and his home and wondered how he could ever get back.

One day he saw a stork feeding near by. He attracted it to him by some crumbs, and then he noticed that it knew him, and he suddenly remembered that it was the old stork that used to haunt his mother's garden in the summer time in Sweden. It was the same old familiar bird. Then it occurred to him that in a little while that bird would go back to Sweden, for the spring was coming on, and he resolved to send a message. He tied a letter to its foot, concealed it with leaves and grass, so as not to be suspected, and then committed it to God.

A few days later the old mother, who had sought her boy in vain, noticed the stork back for the summer, and as usual fed it and welcomed it. Then she observed something tied to its foot and, gently unloosening it, there was the letter from her boy, telling of his capture and begging her to help to ransom him. It was not long before a mother's love had surmounted the difficulty. The Swedish government, backed by the gifts of willing friends, sent a message to the Moorish authorities, and the captive was redeemed and brought home, and the old stork had accomplished its work of rescue.

Dear friend, the captive of sin and satan, and longing for home and help, God's message comes to you with a way of escape, with a voice of invitation, with a welcome home. Come back to God.

"IT'S ME, JESUS." (210)

Matt. 10:32, 33; Luke 12:8, 9.

At a religious meeting in the south of London a timid little girl wanted to come to Jesus, and she said to the gentleman conducting the meeting, "Will you pray for me in the meeting, please? But do not mention my name."

In the meeting when every head was bowed, this gentleman prayed, "O Lord, there is a little girl who does not want her name known, but Thou dost know her; save her precious soul, Lord."

There was a perfect silence, then away in the back of the meeting a little voice said, "Please, it's me, Jesus—it's me!"

HIDING SIN. (211)

Gen. 16:13; Num. 32:23.

A boy walked into a house-painter's shop one day and stood looking at the different colors. The painter had gone out for something, and the boy thought he would investigate a little.

On the floor stood a keg containing 50 lb. of thick white lead, and close beside it was a small one filled with Indian red all ready for the brush. In each was a wooden paddle for stirring up the paint. The boy took hold of the paddle in the smaller keg and held it up, watching the thin red stream which flowed from the end. Something startled him, and he turned quickly and let a single drop fall into the white lead. There it lay, one little red spot in the white mass.

The boy was frightened and wanted to repair the mischief which he had done, but he went at it the wrong way. The red paint had not mixed with the white, for the white was too stiff. If he had taken a little stick or the point of his pocket-knife he might easily have lifted it out, and there would have been no harm done. Instead he tried to hide it by stirring it in. At first a little red streak followed the paddle round and round; soon it disappeared, but some of the lead was stained a very light pink. The boy stirred deeper and deeper, and at last he thought that the red drop was completely hidden. Every spot and streak was gone, and it seemed to him that it was all as clean and pure as ever. But the first thing that the painter said when he came in and looked at it was, "That keg of white lead isn't very white. I wonder what's the matter with it?"

Some of us have tried to do the same thing with the spots in our characters that the boy did with the spot in the white paint. Instead of removing them, we seek to hide them. It's a very poor way. Root a sin out, and you are rid of it; leave it there, and, no matter how well it is covered up, the Painter will find it, if no one else does.

SORRY ENOUGH TO QUIT. (212)

2 Chron. 6:26, 27; Acts 26:20.

"What is repentance?" asked a Sunday School superintendent; and a little girl wisely answered: "It is being sorry enough to quit." Not being sorry, but being sorry enough to quit.

NO HALF-PRICE TICKETS. (213)

Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5.

"Well, I can not understand why a man who has tried to lead a good, moral life should not stand a better chance of heaven than a wicked one," said a lady, in a conversation about the matter of salvation.

"Simply for this cause," answered one: "Suppose you and I wanted to attend a lecture where the admission is a dollar; you have half a dollar and I have nothing. Which would stand the better chance of admission?"

"Neither."

"Just so. But now suppose a kind, rich person, who saw our perplexity, presented a ticket of admission to each of us at his own expense; what then?"

"Well, then, we could both go in alike; that is clear."

ALONE WITH CONSCIENCE. (214)

Matt. 27:3; Luke 23:40-43.

Hon. John P. Hale once said, "Let every one go home, shut himself in his chamber, and get right with the man he sees in the glass."

No more forcible sentence could be spoken to urge the reforming power of thoughtful solitude.

Some years ago, a young man was placed in the condemned cell at Newgate. He had committed a murder, and had been tried and sentenced to die on the gallows.

Alone, face to face with himself, and in full prospect of eternity, he realized for the first time the worth of opportunities he had thrown away. A few religious books were allowed him, one of them a commentary on the Gospels.

On a page in this book containing the story of the penitent thief, he read, one day, in a foot-note, the words, "Even a murderer may hope for God's mercy."

The poor convict's crime-stained soul eagerly caught this whisper of hope. He began in earnest to study the New Testament, searching for truth.

His time was short, but there in his cell he saw through his penitent tears the light of a hope beyond death.

The last night of life that the laws of England gave him had come. He heard every stroke of the fatal hammers—and in the early morning he heard the bell of St. Sepulchre toll his doom.

But just before the time set for his execution a message of commutation arrived from the Queen. Filled with thanksgiving, he fell on his knees, and solemnly devoted his spared life to God.

Shortly afterwards, the young man was sent to Australia, with other transported convicts, and his behavior was so excellent that he was finally granted a "ticket-of-leave," a favor which restored him conditionally to liberty, and permitted him to engage in business for himself.

He continued in the colony, laboring for the moral welfare of his former fellow-convicts. He is now a reformed man and a Christian, faithfully keeping the vow he made in the cell where he received the message of his sovereign's mercy, and the mercy of his God.

A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY. (215)

Job 4:13-17; John 3:2.

Once, on a cold and snowy night, about midnight, I had the strongest impression that I ought to go then and see a gentleman for religious speech with him. I debated with myself a good deal about the lateness of the hour, the cold of the night, the almost certainty that he would be in bed, etc., but I went. And, on my ringing his door-bell, he opened the door, so troubled that he could not sleep; and so I struck the most propitious moment possible in which to preach Jesus to the man. He was so

busy all the day through, there was no chance for speech with him. But there, after midnight, he accepted the Christ in the wonderful opportunity thus given me for a personal talk with him.—Wayland Hoyt, D. D.

THE CONVERSION OF GENERAL HOOKER. (216)

Acts 11: 21-24; 1 Kings 18: 37.

Mr. Killean Van Rensselaer, a well-known Presbyterian, in a letter to the *Christian Work*, related the following: "One Sabbath evening, after the regular service at the Methodist church at Hempstead, Long Island, the pastor conducted a short after-meeting in which he sang two verses of 'The Sweet By-and-By.' After the service a gentleman came up to the pastor and said: 'If you will sing the hymn, "The Sweet By-and-By," next Sabbath evening I will be here.'

"The next Sunday evening a similar service was held. The pastor said that at the request of a gentleman present he would sing the hymn, 'The Sweet By-and-By.' After the hymn had been sung, an invitation for all those who wished to give their hearts to the Lord Jesus Christ was given. The pastor said to the old gentleman:

"'And won't you, too, accept the invitation to go forward?'

"'Certainly!' said the man.

"All prayed for themselves that God, for Christ's sake would forgive their sins.

"After the meeting the minister asked the old man, with his tottering step (he had lost one leg while commanding the Union forces at Missionary Ridge): 'May I ask your name?'

"'Certainly,' came the reply. 'Joseph Hooker.'

"He was asked if he would come to the regular church prayer-meeting the following Friday evening, to relate his experiences, and to tell to others around what a dear Saviour he had found. The general consented. On Tuesday evening, as General Hooker was entering the Garden City Hotel, he fell dead from heart disease. On Friday he was buried, Rev. Charles Miller of the Hempstead Methodist Episcopal church officiating

"The evening he was to attend the prayer-meeting he had entered through the gates into the city."

TRANSFORMED. (217)

Prov. 4: 23; Josh. 24: 15, 20.

A legend is told concerning the Russian Tsar, Ivan the Fourth. This monarch began to reign in his boyhood, and was remarkable for his cheerful amiability. An old chronicler describes him and the Tsarina as "two blessed children, beloved of God and men."

At the age of twenty Ivan lost his wife. Then his character underwent a sudden, inexplicable transformation. He became a pitiless monster, murdering thousands of his subjects to gratify his thirst for blood. He is known in Russian history as Ivan the Terrible.

The legend states that the Angel of Death, when it claimed his wife, was sent also to Ivan's door, but that an evil genie entered his chamber at the same moment, and offered to give him long life on condition that he should become its slave. Ivan consented, and was given a bottle containing a liquid of which he was to swallow a few drops on the first day of each year.

"Whenever he drank of this liquid," says the tradition, "it filled his soul with evil, as a drop of the cuttlefish's secretion turns a cup of water black. Each year Ivan grew more vile, until there was not an atom of his body or heart which belonged to God."

The genie probably was Ivan's own besetting sin, and the elixir was liquor or some other vicious indulgence; but the facts of his life remain no less mysterious and terrible.

As singular a change in the other direction took place in John Newton, who records that when he was serving in an African slave-ship, addicted to the lowest vices, he resolved to give himself back to God. After three years he became a minister of the Gospel, preaching both by a mighty eloquence of words and a holy life. "I drank," he says, "every day, through God's word, of the water of life."

The poison and the elixir are in the world still. We may taste of either each day, and make of ourselves what we will.

Few persons ever think of the terrible capacity for change that is within them. An acorn can grow only into an oak, but an innocent youth at his own will may develop into a criminal; or an ill-tempered, malicious, dishonest man may become one of God's ministering angels in the world.

The Biblical Encyclopedia

MEETS THE TEST OF DAILY USE.

After a preacher has used a set of books for a month, and takes occasion to commend them, when paying for them, you may be sure of their practical intrinsic value. The following letters were received in one mail on Dec. 1st, 1904:

Roodhouse, Ill., Nov. 29, 1904.

F. M. Barton, Cleveland, O.
Dear Sir:—I use them constantly in my work and prize them very highly. Yours truly,
(Pastor Christian Church.) L. Hadaway.

Palmeto, Fla., Nov. 28, 1904.

F. M. Barton,
Dear Sir:—I am well pleased with books and will take them under the second proposition.
(Baptist Missionary.) Rev. P. O. Miller.

F. M. Barton, Fairfield Ill., Nov. 29, 1904.
Dear Sir:—You will find enclosed draft for payment on books. The longer I read them the better I like them. I would not take four times the money and do without them. Very truly yours,
(Pastor Cumberland Pres. Ch.) A. J. Cutrell.

Topeka, Kas., Nov. 28, 1904.

F. M. Barton,
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Yours respectfully,
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Windows for Sermons.

By A. J. ARCHIBALD.

RANSOM FOR MANY. (219)

Mark 10: 45; John 10: 11.

In Japan is a stone monument and beneath it is the dust of only a hand and a foot. In the winter of 1894, the fleet of China was in the harbor, and across its mouth was a strong boom that kept the cruisers of Japan at sea. At night a young lieutenant in a launch went forward with explosives and in the darkness tried to break the boom. The charge was fired, but in vain. Again they tried, to fail again. After the explosives had been arranged the third time the young lieutenant climbed out on the boom and held the dynamite in place, ordering the launch back to the ship. The explosion came. The boom was shattered, and the fleet of China captured. They put a monument above the poor remnants of the shattered body. Such men are our heroes. But far above them all we write the name of him who came from heaven to give his life for us, Jesus the Christ.

INFLUENCE. (220)

1 Pet. 3: 8; Eph. 4: 32.

After a hard summer's toil Professor John Stuart Blackie went back to the University of Edinburgh, tired and exacting. Students desiring admittance stood in a line before him. "Show your papers." As they obeyed a Highland lad held his up awkwardly in the left hand. "Hold them up properly, sir, in the right hand." The boy answered something faintly, but still held them in the left. "The right hand, you loon," roared the Professor. "Sir, I hae nae right hand," said the boy holding up the stub. The class hissed. But the great Blackie came down from his desk and threw both arms around the boy. "Eh, Laddie, forgive me! I was over rough, I dinna mean to hurt you lad, I dinna ken." Then to the class he said, "I thank God he has given me gentlemen to teach me when I go astray." Is it a wonder that the boys loved a man that would right a wrong? Is it a wonder that living or dead such influence counts for righteousness? No tomb can bury such a man.

INFLUENCE. (221)

Eph. 6: 18-20; Acts 28: 20.

Courtland Meyers tells of a young Moravian missionary who one hundred and fifty years ago went to Jamaica, where old slaves were killed to save food, where the governor was often a pirate, where the slave market was more foul and the whips more cruel than in the stock yard. There went the white boy and preached Jesus. But slaves under the lash could not believe him. But an inspiration came to him. He entered the awful market and had himself sold as a slave and was himself lashed and chained and bruised as were the blacks about him. Then they believed him. He became God's messenger to them indeed, till one day the lash bit too deeply and he died. But the story reached Wilberforce, in England, and later came to Lincoln in America and both were spurred on to write "freedom" with their lives for the slave. The young Moravian's life was not lost.

LIVE WITH GOD. (222)

John 4: 23, 24; Isa. 1: 11-17; 1 John 5: 21.

To live with God is religion, and nothing can be substituted for it. General Kuropatkin, Russia's minister of war, is the commander of Russia's army. His most valued piece of baggage, the one protected by a special guard and ever under his eye, is a folding picture, an "icon" they call it in Russia. On it are three larger and three smaller pictures of saints, the whole surmounted by a Russian cross. Wherever Kuropatkin goes that icon goes with him, and is set up. And every soldier in his great army has his baptismal gift around his neck and every regiment has an icon of its own guarded by priests and deacons. Reverence for pictures, and penances and the like, have taken the place of the worship of the spiritual God in the Russian church. But do we not often think that some past experience, some cleanness of life, some self-sacrifice, will atone for lack of acquaintanceship with him? "Bring no more vain oblations, incense is an abomination unto me." Religion does not *begin* until we reach God.

ADVOCATE. (223)

1 John 2: 1, 2.

When Darnley had been murdered, the guilty Mary was compelled by the populace to bring some one to trial. The name on every accusing lip is the Queen's own lover, Bothwell, the great border earl. When the day of trial comes then eager throngs ask each other, "Who will defend the Earl of Bothwell?" But as they ask it, Bothwell, followed by 4,000 men at arms, enters the court. And when that jury saw the overwhelming band of warriors with their weapons they made haste to bring in the verdict, "not guilty." Four thousand armed men were a most efficient advocate. In the day of our trial we will stand alone, alone before our God, unless we have secured the advocacy of Jesus. By all means see to it that he is your Advocate, and you cannot be condemned.

SEED AND SOIL. (224)

Matt. 13: 37-39; Eccl. 11: 6; Hos. 10: 12.

In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus does not even suggest that there was anything wrong with the seed. Lack of harvest was due to poor soil. Hardened soil, stony ground, thistles and the birds to devour; the seed was good. Go over the world and sow wheat. Travel from north to south and sow wheat. When you have sown the world and harvest time has come, go then and reap, and you will find harvests only in spots. Yet all was sown with the same kind of seed. Florida and Arabia may produce oranges and figs but not wheat. So some minds do not accept the truths that Christ's men scatter. Nothing

wrong with the truth! O, no! Hearts do not receive it, that is all. What, then, is to be done? The one solution is hinted at in Ezekiel where it says, "I will take away the stony heart out of their flesh and will give them a heart of flesh." Pray God that he may do it today, that the seed ever being sown may find a place to grow.

FOES A BLESSING. (225)

Psa. 119:71; 1 Pet. 1:6.

As the forests stand in their primeval grandeur, one tree protects another and the rushing gale bends only the tops. But the protected tree is harmed. For when the woodsman's ax lays low the surrounding forest and leaves the great tree standing alone, the first gale bears him down with a crash. That tree protected took but a surface hold upon the soil and went down at the first attack. Had it grown up exposed to the winds of open fields, it could have waved defiance at the fiercest gale that blew. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation."

KNOW GOD. (226)

2 Pet. 1:8; Prov. 2:3-5.

The missionary to Japan sits down for two years at Nagasaki and learns the language, that he may be able to comprehend the life and the questions of those about him and to speak to them in their own tongue. But the war correspondent never tries to learn the language. He hires an interpreter, he goes to a Japanese who can speak English, and says, "I will give you thirty dollars a month to go with me and translate Japanese into English, and English into Japanese." But it is a risky way, for often the interpreter intentionally deceives, and often he makes blunders in his English.

Many of us are depending on the method of the war correspondent. We are not willing to pay the price of personal comprehension of God. We depend upon the interpretation of others who sometimes purposely deceive, and sometimes through ignorance.

DEVELOPMENT. (227)

Jas. 1:2-4; Eph. 6:11.

Ben Hur! the galley slave! see him pull at the oar! How that beam bends as he pulls! Neither the Roman nor the lash could make a stubborn Jew pull like that. He pulls for his own sake. He wants strength; and day by day he feels his muscles harden and sees those sinews enlarge. But he knows that rowing at the same oar always must mean a one-sided development, and he must be perfect. So he calls for the captain and asks to be placed for a time as a rower on the other side of the ship. His request is granted. And when the galley is wrecked and Hur is free, he stands erect, a perfect specimen of manhood. Yes! He was living to meet Messala, the Roman, to take life for life, and he knew that to meet him he would need to be enlarged on every side.

And today, we are at the oar; but the time of the great test is yet to come. We go not to meet a Roman, but God the judge. And so the great question now is—Are you developed on the God-ward side, or has neglect left it weak and shrivelled?

Pathetic Illustration.

"THAT'S YOU, JIM." (227b)

Luke 15:11-32.

A troop of young men who had blacked their faces and hands and dressed themselves in very strange looking clothes, arranged themselves before a gentleman's store one day for a "performance." These people were Ethiopian Serenaders. After they had sung some comic songs, one of them, a tall young man, stepped up to the door and held out his hat for a few pennies.

Mr. Carr, the owner of the store, took one of the Bibles from the case and going to the door said pleasantly, "See here young man, I will give you a shilling and this book besides, if you will read a few verses in it to your companions."

The young man laughed. "That's getting a shilling for an easy job," he said gayly. "Now listen, boys, I'm going to give you a public reading."

Mr. Carr opened to the fifteenth chapter of Luke, and pointing to the eleventh verse, asked him to read:

"A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, Father give me that portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living."

Something in the reader's voice seemed to keep the gay company quiet. He read on—

"And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance in riotous living."

"That's you, Jim," exclaimed one of the boys, "it's just like what you told me of your father."

Jim read on—"And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want."

"Why, that's you again, Jim," the same voice said. "Go on."

"And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him."

"That's like us all," said the same voice again. "We're all beggars and we might be better than we are! Well, go on; let's hear what came of it."

Jim went on but his voice began to tremble—"And when he came to himself he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger? I will arise and go to my father."

At this point he broke down and could read no more. It was his own story told in the Bible; it made him think of his own home, of his father, of the love and care that had been given him when he was a boy, and he made up his mind that he would arise and go to his father.

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Illustrations from Torrey's Evangelistic Campaign.

By Geo. T. B. Davis.

IT IS LOVE THAT WINS. (228)

John 13:34, 35; Acts 20:26, 27, 31.

I went out one night from Chicago to one of our suburbs. When I gave out the invitation for anybody to accept Christ, the first man to do so was away down in the further end of the building. After he had come up to the altar, I sat down and commenced to talk to him. He said, "I'll tell you why I'm here tonight, and why I have accepted Christ. I have been a church attendant for years. When a preacher was preaching, I took out my note-book, and compared his sermon with his life during the week. I'd go to prayer meetings with a note-book, and write down what people said in prayer meeting, and then compare it with their life during the week. About a year ago I was taken sick, and I went down lower and lower, until finally the physician said I'd have to die. I was not disturbed. I had been finding fault with hypocritical church members so long that I thought I was as good as anybody. But as I lay there—as I thought—dying, a man who had been in the ministry came in to see me, and asked me if he might pray with me. I said, 'Yes, if you will enjoy it, I have no objection to your doing so.' But I was not worrying. I thought, 'I'll keep a check on this prayer; I'll see if he is real.' As I watched him praying there, by-and-bye a tear commenced to steal down his face, and I said to myself, 'Here's a man whom I have never spoken to in my life, who has no reason to have any interest in me, and he is weeping for me.' That broke my heart. That's why I'm here tonight, that's why I have taken Christ."

I tell you, friends, there is nothing in this world will win sinners like a passionate love. You may be great at argument, but if you are not great at loving people, you will never accomplish very much. It is love that wins.

HOW A MURDERESS WAS WON. (229)

Ezek. 18:31; Rom. 8:2.

I once had the privilege of leading to Christ one of the three most hopeless cases I ever knew in my life. There have been three persons whom I have met, of whom I have said to God, that if he would give me those three persons, I'd never despair of bringing anyone to Christ as long as I lived. One of these was a woman, and she was a professional murderess, and she had the face of a demon. I cannot go more into the details, but she made her living as a professional murderess of children—babies. On the third occasion that I was talking to this woman, the Spirit of God got her under conviction as soon as we went out. She came back in a few days, and she said, "Oh, you can talk to me if you please. Do you know what I did after I went out of your meeting. I went home, and I prayed to the devil to take my conviction of sin away. You may believe me, I prayed to the devil himself, and he has done it." Truly a hopeless case, was it not? But God is able to save the most hopeless sinner. I just kept on praying and talking, and God gave me the joy of bringing that woman to Christ. Not very long after, in my Bible Class, I led her to Christ. It is a Bible Class made up of every sort under heaven. The next Sunday, among those who rose to say they had become Christians was a man who got up at the back of the house. The woman who had had the face of a demon before, came to me with the face of an angel, and she said, "Mr. Torrey, I brought that man here. I was going to the class, and I saw that man on the corner, and I thought I'd do something for Christ. I brought him here, and he is saved; and," she said, "now I'm so happy!"

Friends, if God could use a woman like that, he can use any of you. Now, just go right out of this place today with the love of Christ and the love of the perishing in your heart, and, being thoroughly converted first ourselves, try to bring others to Christ.

SACRIFICE FOR SOUL-WINNING.

Rom. 14:13, 21; 1 Cor. 8:13. (230)

I want every last ounce of influence that I can have with anybody, and if there is anything, I don't care how innocent, pure, or pleasant, that will hurt my influence with anybody, by the grace of God, I am going to give it up. Gentlemen, no minister of the Gospel in this day ever smoked without hurting his influence with somebody. One of the godliest men that I know, who smokes, was invited by a Christian woman to her home because her husband was unsaved. He came there, and he made himself most delightful, and the man was very nearly won. When dinner was over, and they went out on the front porch, the man said, "Would you mind my smoking? Of course you don't smoke." "Yes, I occasionally smoke a cigar." No sooner had the minister lighted his cigar, than the man went off the porch, and hurried upstairs to his wife, and said: "Come down and see your saint smoking on the front porch." And never could that man touch him. Brethren we are in a fight. Can you not give these things up for the sake of winning one more soul?

THE STORY OF A BEAUTIFUL HYMN. (231)

Rev. 14:18; Heb. 11:13.

Mr. Charles M. Alexander, the successor of Ira D. Sankey, and the associate of Rev. R. A. Torrey in the remarkable Torrey-Alexander revival campaign around the world, recently told the following story of the origin of a beautiful hymn.

I always like to know how hymns came to be written, and so I asked the man who wrote this hymn how he came to do so. He told me that a friend of his went from New York City to the country. He was far gone in consumption, but in the deceptive nature of the disease thought that he was growing better day by day, till one morning he said he was so much improved in health that he was returning to the city the next day. The writer of the hymn went to see him in the after-

noon, and found him in bed again. "Why," he said, "I thought you were going to the city tomorrow." The sick man's face lighted up, and he answered: "I'm going to a city, but it is a city where the living never die, and where no sickness and no sorrow can come." He did go to that "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." After his death his friend, remembering his words, wrote this hymn; the chorus runs:

"I am going to a city
Where the living never die,
Where no sickness and no sorrow can molest;
From this body to release me,
He is speeding from on high;
He will greet me and escort to my rest."

THE SECRET OF HIS POWER. (232)

Psa. 56: 8; 1 Thess. 2: 7-12.

One of the greatest soul-winners we ever had in Chicago was Colonel Clark, who spent all the income that he made—which was a very large one—in rescuing the perishing and fallen. He would go down to his mission every night in the year, preaching as best he could. I thought he was a rather poor preacher, yet those men would flock to hear him. I could not at first understand the reason. He was always saying the same thing over and over again, and he did not say it in a very interesting way; and yet that great crowd would come night after night. Why did they come? Because they knew Colonel Clark loved them. He had more power with them than all the preachers in the city. He used to just stand right up there with the tears running down his cheeks, as he pleaded with those drunkards, thieves, and abandoned men and women. Well, after a while he got a bit ashamed of his tears, and so he said, "I musn't be so chicken-hearted. I must try to keep off crying." He succeeded. Our hearts are hard enough, and after a while he shed no tears. But he got no converts, and he saw he was winning no souls, and he went alone with God, and said, "Oh God, give me back my tears," and God gave him his tears, and he won souls for Christ.

THE POWER OF THE WONDERFUL STORY. (233)

Ezek. 18: 31; 1 Pet. 3: 18.

Mr. Alexander also related the following true incident of the power of the story of the Cross to redeem fallen men:

"I know a lady who devotes the whole of her time to Christian work. She lives in the northeastern States of America, but she travels about all over the country. She was once in California, and they chanced to tell her of a dying man, a miner, lying in a rough hut up in the hills. 'Ah,' said the lady. 'I think that is one of my sort of men.' They tried to persuade her not to go. 'He is a most blashpemous man,' they said. She went, and the man roughly shouted out, 'Get out of my light.' The lady spoke gently, and said, 'My friend, do you remember your mother?' 'Yes, curse her!' howled the man. 'Do you ever think about your wife?' 'Yes, the—, I should think so!' The lady uttered a silent prayer for guidance, and then said, 'My friend, did you ever have a little child?' A softened look came into his face, and he said, 'Yes, I did, a sweet little girl, and I cursed God when she died.' 'Ah, my friend, don't you see God's love in taking her away, that she might not grow up like her mother? Now, let me read you a little about the God that loves you, as well as her.' And she read him the story of Jesus. After a little bit he said, 'Read to me again about the Man that died for me.' She read it again. She came again and again, and that rough man was first softened, then melted, then converted. After a few days he said, 'I haven't much longer to live. Send for all the boys to come to me.' So the miners were sent for, and they came, and quite filled the little hut. 'Now,' said the dying man, 'read them what you read me, about the Man who died for me, and who died for them too.'"

Two Original Illustrations.

By GEO. R. LUNN.

MODERN TEMPTATION.

Matt. 4: 4; John 4: 34. (234)

Does this temptation come to men as it came to Jesus? Let me tell you the experience of a most devoted young disciple of Jesus Christ, who felt called of God to the gospel ministry. I knew him well and loved him dearly. The experience was related to me in part by the young man's mother, in part by the young man himself. He hesitated long before finally deciding to prepare for the ministry. The indecision was due to the poverty of his family and he felt that his first duty was to gain bread. But a dear, faithful mother urged and prayed that together they might bear the sting of want so that her boy might preach. Still the boy hesitated. He was already in the college, but had about decided that he must leave. One day on going home to lunch, his mother told him that he had better eat his meal in his room as she did not care for anything to eat. She gave him a crust of bread. It was the only morsel of food in that house, but the son knew it not. He went to his room, led up of the Spirit to be tempted of the devil. The great word to his soul was being spoken by the Almighty Father. The tempter came. "You cannot study without food. Leave these college walls and go forth and provide bread. God wants you not in the ministry, else he would provide." This noble boy told me that it was there, in that cold room, with a body craving for food, that he heard the voice of God and decided that it was God's will for him to prepare for the ministry. That is the nearest human parallel to our Lord's first temptation that I have ever known or ever heard. That boy entered the ministry, preached with extraordinary power, influenced hundreds for Jesus Christ, and at his untimely death, the chancellor of that great university of nearly three thousand students, said that no student ever entered those college walls, who had exerted so strong an influence in every thing that was good and ennobling. One year after this young man's death, before

the same students, that chancellor took five minutes during his annual commencement address, to speak of the Christ-like character of the alumnus so recently gone to his reward. Knowing the circumstances as I do, valuing supremely his lofty character, having felt the uplifting influence of his life which made the very hem of his garment healing, I cannot but feel that he accomplished during the very few years of his active life, the equivalent of the three score years and ten. He early learned the great truth, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

[Part of sermon on "Temptation of Jesus," preached in First Reformed Church, Schenectady, N. Y., Sunday morning, March 6th.]

"NO MAN CARETH FOR MY SOUL."

Isa. 35: 3; Heb. 12: 12. (235)

The following incident came within my observation. A lady friend visited a woman who lived in direst poverty, to invite her to a religious service. This friend knew the sad circumstances of the home she entered and endeavored to bring some word of comfort and cheer. She finally said, "I have come to ask you to attend our service at the chapel tonight. I want you to come." "Why do you want me? No one cares about me," came the answer. The lady replied, "I care for you. You do not know it but yesterday I thought of you and prayed for you." The tears came to the poor woman's eyes as she said, "Then life's worth living if one cares for me. I did not think anyone in this world ever thought of me." The words came forth from a lonely heart and the voice clearly manifested that her lady visitor had stirred the depths of a human soul by that one thoughtful act of kindness. "Life's worth living if one cares for me." Oh my friends, how vast our opportunities for bringing cheer to discouraged hearts if we will only go where, I am sure, our Master would go, and where he calls us to go in his name. There are many sad homes where the pathetic cry of the psalmist is being repeated today. The call comes to you and to me to enter his service and enter it now, today. Go out into the highways and compel them by the compulsion of love to come to the Father's house.

New Year Thoughts.

IDEALS FOR THE NEW YEAR. (236)

Heb. 12: 1, 2.

There is nothing equal to the power of an ideal. A beautiful statue once stood in the market-place of an Italian city. It was the statue of a Greek slave girl. It represented the slave as tidy, well dressed, and handsome. A ragged, unkempt, forlorn street child, coming across the statue in her play, stopped and gazed at it with admiration. She was entranced and captivated by it. She gazed long and admiringly. Moved by a sudden impulse, she went home and washed her face and combed her hair. Another day she stopped again before the statue and admired it, and received a new inspiration. Next day her tattered clothes were washed and mended. Each time she looked at the statue she found something new to imitate in its beauties, until she was a transformed child. That statue was an ideal to that poor child, and it acted as ideals always act. It pointed out possibilities; it awakened ambition; it created a new life; and it wrought elevating changes. We want to fill our life with grand ideals, as the Greeks filled their market-places with educating statues.—Selected.

A NEW START. (237)

Ezek. 11: 19, 20.

I will this day try to live a simple, sincere, and serene life; repelling promptly every thought of discontent, anxiety, discouragement, impurity, and self-seeking; cultivating cheerfulness, magnanimity, charity, and the habit of holy silence; exercising economy in expenditure, carefulness in conversation, diligence in appointed service, fidelity to every trust, and a child-like trust in God.

And as I cannot in my own strength attain this measure of wisdom and power, I make humble and firm resolve to seek all these things from my Heavenly Father in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and through the mystic and mighty energy of his Holy Spirit. —Bishop John H. Vincent.

KINDNESS. (238)

1 Peter 3: 8, 9.

"When you rise in the morning, form a resolution to make the day a happy one to a fellow-creature. It is easily done; a left-off garment to the man who needs it, a kind word to the sorrowful, an encouraging expression to the striving, trifles in themselves light as air, will do it, at least for the twenty-four hours; and if you are young, depend upon it, it will tell when you are old; and if you are old, it will send you gently and happily down the stream of human time to eternity. By the most simple arithmetical sum, look at the result: You send one person, only one, happily through the day—that is three hundred and sixty-five during the course of the year; and suppose you live only forty years after you commence that kind of medicine, you have made fourteen thousand six hundred human beings happy, at all events for a time. Now, is not this simple? It is too short for a sermon, too homely for ethics, too easily accomplished for you to say: 'I would if I could.' "—Sydney Smith.

RELIGION IN EVERY-DAY LIFE. (239)

Jas. 1:27; 2 Pet. 1: 5-9.

President Roosevelt once, preaching in a Chicago pulpit, gave this advice: "In your business and work," declared that thoroughgoing man, "if you let Christianity stop when you leave the church door, there is not much righteousness in you. Nor are you any too righteous if your Christianity stops at the door of your home. The man who carries Christianity into his every-day work stands a better chance of making a success of life than one who does not."

DAVID LIVINGSTONE'S RESOLVE. (240)

Matt. 6: 33.

I will place no value on anything I have or may possess except in relation to the Kingdom of Christ. If anything will advance the interests of that kingdom, it shall be given away or kept, only as by the giving or keeping of it I shall most promote the glory of him to whom I owe all my hopes in time and eternity. May grace and strength sufficient to enable me to adhere faithfully to this resolution be imparted to me, so that, not in name only, all my interests may be identified with his cause—David Livingstone.

THE PATIENT PLODDER. (241)

Rom. 2: 7; Luke 8: 15.

An intelligent Christian woman was recently heard to say, "For many years I was in deep distress on the subject of personal religion. The experience which others around me had attained seemed to be beyond my reach. I had no mystical insight; no rapt emotions; no deep sense of sin; no inward tumult of joy; indeed, no special experience of any kind; yet I wanted to be a Christian; I wanted to live in Christ's way; I wanted to follow him as my Lord and Leader. One day in reading my New Testament I came across the words 'patient continuance in well-doing,' and I said I can understand that; I can start upon that line; I can go on in the path of discipleship as a patient plodder, taking up one duty at a time." And she did; with the happy result that her life has been one of abounding service, quietly rendered, for her Lord and Master.

THE SIMPLE LIFE. (242)

Eccl. 2: 24-26.

Suppose that the Christian life, in its daily manifestation, should come to be marked and known by simplicity and happiness. Suppose that the followers of Jesus should really escape from bondage to the evil spirits of avarice and luxury which infect and torment so much of our complicated, tangled, artificial modern life. Suppose that instead of increasing their wants and their desires; instead of loading themselves down on life's journey with so many bags and parcels and boxes of superfluous luggage and bric-a-brac, that they are forced to sit down by the roadside and gasp for breath; instead of wearing themselves out in the dusty ways of competition and vain show, or embittering their hearts because they cannot succeed in getting into the weary race of wealth and fashion,—suppose instead of all this, they should turn to quiet ways, lowly pleasures, pure and simple joys, "plain living and high thinking." Suppose they should truly find and clearly show their happiness in the knowledge that God loves them and Christ died for them and heaven is sure, and so set their hearts free to rejoice in life's common mercies, the light of the sun, the blue of the sky, the splendor of the sea, the peace of the everlasting hills, the song of the birds, the sweetness of flowers, the wholesome savor of good food, the delight of action and motion, the refreshment of sleep, the charm of music, the blessings of human love and friendship—rejoice in all these without fear or misgiving, because they come from God, and because Christ has sanctified them all by his presence and touch.—Henry Van Dyke.

Gleaned from Latest Books.

By S. A. Wilson.

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT KEPT THROUGH THE YEAR. (243)

Gal. 6: 9.

Recently in one of our cities an Oriental said he had observed that for sometime before Christmas, people's faces in this country seemed to have an unusual light in them. They were all bright and shining, Everyone seemed kindly and courteous, more desirous of giving pleasure, than had been his wont. Men who at other seasons of the year are stern and unapproachable had now become genial, easily approached. Those who ordinarily are close, never opening their hands to charity, had become for the time generous and charitable. Those who had been in the habit of doing small and mean things, when they entered the edge of the warm Christmas zone, began to act like new men, a kindly human interest taking possession of them.

The Oriental who made these observations added that it would be a good thing if only the charm of this happy Christmas spirit could be made to project itself into and through the new year.—J. R. Miller in *The Inner Life*.

THE FRAGRANCE OF A LOVELY CHARACTER. (244)

Luke 6: 45; 1 Pet. 3: 4.

A young lady was spending the day in the country. Early in the morning she picked a branch of sweetbrier and put it in her bosom. She soon forgot that it was there, but all day long, wherever she went, she smelled the spicy fragrance, wondering whence it came. On woodland paths, bare fields, and rocky gorges, as the party strolled about, the air seemed laden with the sweet smell. As the party went home, she thought, "Some one must have a bouquet of sweetbrier," not dreaming that it was she who had it. At night she found the handful of sweetbrier tucked away in her dress, where she had put it in the morning. "How good it would be," she said to herself, "if I could carry such a sweet spirit in my breast that every one I meet should seem lovely!"

If you have sweetbrier tucked away in your bosom, you will discover the fragrance of sweetbrier on every person you come near. This is the secret of that fine art some people possess of always finding only beauty and good in others. They have goodness and beauty in themselves.—J. R. Miller in *The Inner Life*.

SOME GOOD IN EVERYONE. (245)

Luke 7: 9.

Humboldt tells of discovering some lovely little flowers growing on the very lip of the

crater of Vesuvius. Pulverized lava had settled in a little depression and the birds or the winds had carried a few seeds which had dropped into the cupful of soil. Then the rain had fallen, and there on the edge of the crater bloomed these little flowers. So in the most depraved life there still are some gleams of beauty.—J. R. Miller in *The Inner Life.*

INFLUENCE OF ONE BOY. (246)

When Fichte, the German philosopher, was a boy in his twelfth year, he was sent to one of those medieval schools in which the paths of learning are made as thorny as possible. The fagging system was in vogue, and the senior to whom Fichte was committed was a young brute to whom tyranny was a recreation. At last he resolves to fly, and takes up his journey. But he remembers the counsel of the good Herr Pastor never to do anything serious without prayer, and he falls on his knees by the roadside. Now he thinks of his parents, their well-imagined grief unnerves him; he turns back to meet his pursuers, and is taken before the Rector of the school, to whom he tells the whole story so ingenously that he is not only not punished but is taken by that functionary under his special protection. From this time a new spirit seems to take possession of the school; petty tyrannies give place to a manlier temper. Who shall say how much the high-mindedness of this boy had to do with this reformation?—From "Witness of the Light," Washington Gladden. [Houghton & Mifflin.]

A KEY TO THE BIBLE. (247)

A lady once traveled a long distance on a railroad with her trunk unlocked. When she met her husband at the terminus and reported the fact there was naturally some emotion in her speech. She had been unable to find the key anywhere, she said, and only discovered its loss too late to have another fitted before she started on her journey. And the trunk with all its treasures had come that whole distance with only a strap around it. "Why," exclaimed her husband, "when I come home from a journey I always fasten the key of the trunk to one of its handles. There's your key," pointing to the end of the trunk.

The incident is recalled by the frequent inquiry for a "key" to the Bible. The Author has provided one always at hand. Read the book.—James M. Gray, "How to Master the English Bible."

Preacher's Scrap Book.

N. J. SQUIRES.

FAITHFUL IN LITTLE THINGS. (248)

Matt. 25:23; Luke 16:10.

Booker T. Washington, in that most helpful and pathetic of books, "Up from Slavery," tells us how he gained admission to Hampton Institute. He had tramped, and begged, and worked his way, 500 miles, from West Virginia, and it seemed to him that his life's fate hung upon the result. He was given a broom and told to sweep a certain recitation room. This is how he tells the story:

"Never did I receive an order with more delight..... I swept the recitation room three times and I dusted it four times. All the woodwork around the walls, every bench, table and desk. I went over four times with my dusting cloth. Besides, every piece of furniture had been moved, and every closet and corner in the room had been thoroughly cleaned..... When I was through, I reported to the head teacher. She was a Yankee woman who knew just where to look for dirt. She went into the room and inspected the floor and the closets, then she took her handkerchief and rubbed it on the woodwork about the walls, and over the table and benches.

"When she was unable to find one bit of dirt on the floor, or a particle of dust on any of the furniture, she quietly remarked: 'I guess you will do to enter this institution.' I was one of the happiest souls on earth. The sweeping of that room was my college examination, and never did any youth pass an examination for entrance into Harvard or Yale that gave him more genuine satisfaction."

It was that faithful and painstaking doing of a humble duty that has placed Booker T. Washington among the foremost leaders of his race and men of our day. The boy or girl who is faithful when put behind a broom is thereby proving his fitness to be placed behind the counter, or the bar, or the pulpit by and by.

THE DIGNITY OF WORK. (249)

1 Cor. 4:12; 1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 3:10.

Mr. Washington puts great emphasis on the dignity of labor and in cultivating a genuine love for it. Speaking of life at Hampton Institute, where he got his ideas and inspiration for his greater work at Tuskegee, he says: "At Hampton, for the first time, I learned what education was expected to do for an individual. Before going there I had a good deal of the then rather prevalent idea among our people that to secure an education meant to have a good, easy time, free from all necessity for manual labor. At Hampton I not only learned that it was not a disgrace to labor but learned to love labor, not alone for its financial value, but for labor's own sake, and for the independence and self-reliance which the ability to do something which the world wants brings. At that Institution I got my first taste of what it meant to live a life of unselfishness, my first knowledge of the fact that the happiest individuals are those who do the most to make others useful and happy."

Probably the greatest misfortune that one can be born into is that of having no necessity of work. To be born with the "silver spoon" in one's mouth is often to be foreordained to an utter worthlessness. Better follow the hoe than a pipe.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS' NOBILITY.

1 Pet. 2:20; 1 Pet. 3:14. (250)

Mr. Washington also relates how Frederick

Douglass was at one time travelling in the State of Pennsylvania and was forced, on account of his color, to ride in the baggage car, in spite of the fact that he had paid the same price for his passage that the other passengers had paid. When some of the white passengers went into the baggage car to console Mr. Douglass, one of them said to him: "I am sorry, Mr. Douglass, that you have been degraded in this manner." Mr. Douglass straightened himself up on the box upon which he was sitting, and replied: "They cannot degrade Frederick Douglass. The soul that is within me no man can degrade. I am not the one that is being degraded on account of this treatment, but those who are inflicting it upon me."

Mr. Douglass was right. You cannot inflict a wrong upon another without inflicting a greater wrong upon yourself. The only thing that can degrade a soul is sin, whose infallible sign is not the black skin but a black heart.

PERSEVERANCE. (251)

Luke 9:62; Matt. 10:22.

The value of perseverance under difficulties is well illustrated by Mr. Washington's experience in brick making at Tuskegee. He undertook brick making as a part of his general plan to teach his students how to do things. He says he had always supposed brick making to be a simple affair until a bitter experience taught otherwise.

After finding a suitable pit of brick clay, they succeeded in moulding about 25,000 bricks, which were spoiled in burning. They began again on a second kiln, which also proved an entire failure; and this made it still more difficult to persuade the students to render any further aid. However, they went at it again, and soon had a third kiln ready for burning, which occupied about a week. Nearly at the close of the week this kiln fell, and the third attempt ended in failure.

Without a dollar left, and a thoroughly discouraged set of teachers and students who advised against any further effort, Mr. Washington pawned his watch for money to make a fourth trial which, fortunately, succeeded, and which prepared the way to a most successful industry, not only at Tuskegee, but, through its pupils, in many other places in the south.

CHRISTIAN UNITY. (252)

1 Cor. 3:3; 12:12; 1 Thess. 1:8.

Perhaps the most remarkable bell ever cast in America was the "Columbian Liberty Bell," cast at the Meneely Foundry in 1893, and exhibited at the World's Fair in that year, and since in many of the principal cities of our country. Its weight is 13,000 pounds—each of the thirteen colonies being represented by 1,000 pounds—type of the equality that binds every state, small or great, into the one great union of states. But the most interesting fact is that over 200,000 persons throughout the land contributed to the casting of this great bell. One can scarcely imagine how many different kinds of people whose temperaments, habits, dispositions, callings, trades and professions, all sorts, and conditions of folk are represented in this unique composition; and yet, as represented in the deep, mellow, far-resounding tones of the great bell, they have lost all their jars and discords and have become gloriously one. You cannot pick out their individual differences of ancestry, race, politics or creed. Each one made his contribution, and the whole volume of sound is richer and fuller because of it. There is but one tongue, one body, one voice.

This is a striking illustration of what the Lord's people ought to be and must be before the kingdoms of this world shall become truly his, and he be crowned the Lord of all.

MODESTY IN PROFESSION. (253)

Matt. 6:1-4; 1 Thess. 1:8.

One of our largest bell makers says: "It is a well known law of sound that an instrument, constructed strictly according to musical rules, has greater carrying power than even one of larger size of less expert manufacture, although, apparently, not producing so much noise nearby. Sound travels in waves, and the nearer perfect the waves the less resistance from the air."

It isn't necessarily the biggest bell that you want in your church steeple, or the noisiest men in the pews. It isn't the man of the loudest profession whose influence is farthest felt, but the man who backs up his profession with his life. Beecher used to say, "Be as good as you possibly can be and then say as little as possible about it."

INTERPRETING PROVIDENCE. (254)

Rom. 11:33; Luke 12:56.

"It is difficult to wisely interpret Providence. God writes in such large characters that few, if any, are able to read and accurately interpret what is written. An Indian carried a chip upon which a Plymouth soldier had written a message to his family. It was to him a deep mystery that awed him. He held it in a split stick and carried it with reverence and holy fear. He could not read and understand what was written. But he saw the marks and knew that the chip would talk to those who could read the writing. Somewhat in this way we feel and read the purposes of Providence. We cannot accurately interpret his writing upon the sky and in events, but we know that something is there recorded. Sometime some revelation of Providence will come."

CONSCIENCE AFIRE. (255)

Mark 9:48; Matt. 27:3-5.

One of our metropolitan journals of recent date (New York Tribune) cites the case of a young man who had borne the name of being the worst boy in his town and had finally escaped from a reform school and fled to California, who came back and voluntarily gave himself up for punishment "because his conscience branded him as an outlaw."

Once when Joseph Parker was asked if he believed there was a hell, he gave the startling answer: "I know there is; I've been there!" The man who has been awakened to a deep sense of sin, or felt the anguish of remorse, is able to understand somewhat the awful meaning of "the worm that never dies," and of "the fire that is never quenched." That is hell.

Matthew's Gospel from Life in Matthew's Land.

GHOSN EL HOWIE, Shweir, Mt. Lebanon, Syria.

Matt. 2: 11. "They fell down and worshipped him."

Among my school-mates there was once a young prince, that is, the son of an emeer. The father of some other boys, on one occasion, entered the school yard and found us at play; the old man went straight to the young prince, bowed to him and kissed his hand, saluting him: "How is your Highness, my Lord?" The man's own sons were greatly chagrined at the conduct of their father and could scarcely restrain themselves, for they objected to their father bowing his head to one who was no more than "a mere school-mate of ours." However, the old man acted in thorough harmony with the manners of his and former generations; the sons manifested the spirit of this generation.

My own father was ashamed of me once and rebuked me, because when a prince asked me, "Whose son art thou?" I answered truthfully, but impolitely, "I am the son of T. H." Correct manners required me to say, "I am the son of thy slave, T. H." (Gen. 43: 28.)

Many of the present generation, however, especially those who have been educated under European and American influence, refuse to conform to what their grandfathers considered "correct manners." This is one of the signs that the East is changing and one of the reasons why Bible students should gather and treasure up records and accounts of Eastern manners and customs, for the benefit of both the present and future generations of those who may wish to understand the Bible thoroughly.

I have seen persons on their knees or down upon their faces before their superiors, suing for pardon, as in the case of Shimei and David (2 Sam. 19: 18); others in similar posture praying a physician for medical assistance for their children or friends, as in the case of a certain man and Jesus in Matt. 17: 14.

Oriental Christians salute their bishops with bare heads and bended knees, and Moslems prostrate themselves many times in 24 hours during their stated devotions, and both in Persia and other parts of the East people are accustomed to fall or bend down their persons before earthly princes and potentates; but these Oriental customs cannot account for the falling of the wise men before a babe in Bethlehem. We know nothing of people going out of their way, undertaking long and tedious journeys, to fall down and worship at the feet of a stranger, and least of all to fall down and worship an infant whose parents are in a humbler walk of life than the worshippers, as manifestly Joseph and Mary were the inferiors of their visitors.

The wise men, therefore, must have recognized in the infant Jesus a being, specifically different from other kings and of a different origin, and their falling and worship before him must have been different, entirely different, from the accustomed prostration by Orientals before Oriental potentates.

Matt. 2: 11. "They presented unto him gifts."

On two occasions within the last three years, a married couple among our neighbors had welcomed baby-boy additions to their family, and on each occasion persons could be seen ascending their rickety, stone steps, with gifts or presents in their hands which they delivered to the parents with many words expressive of good wishes and congratulations, and the one-roomed house looked like a small grocery, for the exposed presents consisted of bread, cakes, rice, raisins, sugar, walnuts, bottles of wine, etc.

On every such occasion a correct record is made by the receiving parents of all the gifts received, and the names of the friendly givers, and such gifts are looked upon and remain as a debt of honor to be repaid on the first occasion when the creditor, so to speak, should have a wedding, a birth of a male child, or some such happy event.

This phase of Eastern life exhibits an exchange of gifts among friendly equals, as a sign of continued good-will towards each other. Plainly, the gifts of the wise men to our Lord do not belong to this class.

Second, parties in a lawsuit make frequent gifts to the judiciary and the executive, and it is not difficult to divine the reason for this immemorial and wide-spread Oriental practice, which is hardly distinguishable from bribery. (Prov. 19: 6; 29: 4; Ex. 23: 8; Prov. 17: 8, 23; 18: 16; Is. 1: 23.)

Third, subjects make presents to their ruling princes. It was still the custom in the days of my boyhood for the fellahin, or peasants, and the common people to make presents of coffee, beans, sugar, tobacco, rice, meat or live-stock to their princes on occasions such as the birth of a boy, a wedding, or a return from a journey.

Fourth, vassals made presents to their suzerains and gifts of this class are practically a tribute and a sign of submission to the receiver of the presents. The children of Belial, who refused to recognize Saul as their prince, knew this and declared their meaning by withholding their presents from him. (1 Sam. 10: 27.)

On the other hand, the chieftains, who held sway between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean, indicated their submission to Solomon by presents and service (1 Kings 4: 21), and Hoshea covered the profound hatred which was in his heart by bringing rich presents in his hand to his oppressor, Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria (2 Kings 17: 3). The author of "The Life of Medhas Pasha" (John Murray, London) tells the world that governors purchased their appointments by gifts at the palace at Constantinople, to the manifest injury of the state.

It would seem, therefore, that the gifts of the wise men in Bethlehem were not brought about by the common considerations which make Eastern people make presents.

Quotable Poetry.

LIFE'S RAILWAY.

Arthur Stringer wrote the following lines:

I have thrown the throttle open and am tearing down God's track;
I have thrown it out to full-speed and no hand can hold me back!
'Tis my arm controls the engine, though Another owns the rail,
But for once I'm in the open and the yard-lights pass and pale!

Green lights! Red lights! God has hung his signals out!
Caution here! Danger ho! And what's the man about?
'Tis true he owns the Engine, to do as he has done,
But how about the Final Word—when he ends the run?

So from siding on to junction point now I shall have my day;
I have stopped to read no orders, but I take the right-of-way.
Down the open grade I thunder and around the curve I swing,
For my hand is on the throttle and my heart shall have its fling!

Light lost! Life lost! Flag, O flag the others back!
Switch the wreck! Ditch the wreck! Dare any block God's track?
There creeps into the Terminal the man who had his day,
But I wonder, O my soul, just what his God will say!

OPPORTUNITY.

"Master of human destinies am I!
Fame, love and fortune on my footsteps wait;
Cities and fields I walk, I penetrate
Deserts and seas remote and passing by
Hovel and mart and palace, soon or late
I knock unbidden once at every gate.
If sleeping, wake; if feasting, rise before
I turn away. It is the hour of fate,
And they who follow me reach every state
Mortals desire and conquer every foe
Save death; but those who doubt or hesitate,
Condemned to failure, penury and woe,
Seek me in vain and uselessly implore,
I answer not and I return no more."

LIFE AND DOUBT.

I have a life with Christ to live,
But ere I live it, must I wait
Till learning can clear answer give
Of this and that book's date?
I have a life in Christ to live,
I have a death in Christ to die;
And must I wait till science give
All doubts a full reply?

Nay, rather, while the sea of doubt
Is raging wildly round about,
Questioning of life and death and sin,
Let me but creep within
Thy fold, O Christ, and at thy feet
Take but the lowest seat,
And hear thine awful voice repeat
In gentlest accents, heavenly sweet,
"Come unto me and rest;
Believe me and be blest."

—John Campbell Shairp.

Sermon in a Poem.

NONE OF OUR BUSINESS.

[A little girl was heard to finish her evening prayer with these words: "And I saw a poor little girl on the street today, cold and bare-footed; but it's none of our business, is it, God?"]

"None of our business!" wandering and sinful,
All through the streets of the city they go,
Hungry and homeless in the wild weather—
None of our business! Dare we say so?

"None of our business!" Children's wan faces,
Haggard and old with their suffering and sin;
Hold fast your darlings on tender, warm bosoms,
Sorrow without, but the home light within.

What does it matter that some other woman—
Some common mother—in bitter despair,
Wails in a garret, or sits in a cellar,
Too broken-hearted for weeping or prayer?

"None of our business!" Sinful and fallen,
How they may jostle us close on the street!
Hold back your garment! Scorn? They are used to it;
Pass on the other side lest you should meet.

None of our business! On, then, the music;
On with the feasting, though hearts break forlorn;
Somebody's hungry, somebody's freezing,
Somebody's soul will be lost ere the morn.

Somebody's dying (on with the dancing!);
One for earth's pottage is selling his soul;
One for a bauble has bartered his birthright,
Selling his all for a pitiful dole.

Ah, but One goeth abroad on the mountains,
Over lone deserts, with burning deep sands!
Seeking the lost ones (it is His business!)
Bruised though his feet are, and torn though his hands.

Thorn-crowned his head and his soul sorrow-stricken,
(Saving men's souls at such infinite cost),
Broken his heart for the grief of the nations;
It is His business—saving the lost!

Homiletic Department.

G. B. F. HALLOCK, D. D., Editor.

GIST OF RECENT SERMONS.

By JOHN SPARHAWK JONES, ROBERT MACKENZIE, the late GEORGE C. LORIMER, W. C. KING, LEN G. BROUGHTON, R. E. WILLIAMS, PAUL F. SUTPHEN, ARTHUR T. PIERSON.

THE COMING TEMPLE.

Text: "And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it."—Rev. 21: 22.

The Hebrew prophets probably saw the developments of the future as one sees objects in a dream. They took no note of time or order or exact sequence; details were not marshaled with scrupulous care; the ground was not staked off like a meadow or lot by stiff lines of demarkation; the great features stood out in bold relief and clear as sunlight, but the rest lay in shadow, and the prophet did not see distinctly beyond the main interest and the cardinal facts. Hence the ambiguous, misty character of the prophetic Scriptures. Facts are set side by side and seen in immediate juxtaposition, which in point of time are separated by long intervals. Christ describes the siege and sack of Jerusalem and the end of the gospel dispensation among the Gentiles in the same breath, sliding out of the one into the other without premising that they were two totally distinct histories, divided by centuries, so that it has puzzled commentators to interpret him. This is a characteristic of prophecy.

Listen to John, how his imagination wings away into a coming future. He beholds splendid cities, he hears the thunder of mighty orchestras, he sees the streets paved with gold, a new social order, a new civic life, a new worship, a new civilization rising out of the decay of old fixtures. When, where, how, is not distinctly stated; only this much—he sees that the radical, universal change is to have human nature as its material and basis; living either here on a renovated earth, or in another sphere, or perhaps in both.

I. Among other characteristics of the new order he declares there shall be no temple there. Let down in vision amid that strange scenery and all its furniture and appliances, he looked round to ascertain through what methods and institutions the new life of man would express itself. Was it to be like the old Jerusalem, Rome, or Babylon, or any of the old world capitals—of solid masonry and a maze of buildings? And the one thing that struck him most forcibly was this, that he found no Solomon's or Herod's temple, no Aaronic priest, no ephod, no miter, no processionals, no curling incense there. What does this signify? What but this, that the era is coming in the education of man when the soul will be ripe for a fuller, more voluminous revelation of God, and of the truths that concern him; and when, by consequence, the current modes of conception, of statement, of formal expression and of consecrated usage will fall away as inadequate or superfluous, because the moral reason of man shall have come closer to reality and be readier to apprehend it?

II. I remark in view of this prophecy that the arrangements of this present world are only relatively good and are not designed to be permanent. Whatever they be—either secular or sacred—they stand related to man's present faculties and needs as these now exist, not as they may be modified hereafter. Human life on this planet is not a stable fixture, an absolute abiding thing. It is a running stream, winding through successive landscapes and latitudes of opinion and custom. Incessant and insensible changes are evermore set up. The instrument, method, statement which suits one period will undergo alteration later, and possibly be replaced later still by something that better satisfies the hunger that is in the air and the evils that cry for a remedy.

John gives voice to this great fact of the advance of man from stage to stage, when, speaking of some future era, he says that there was no temple there. And if one could imagine himself a literal Methuselah living a thousand years, a contemporary of ages, he would have occasion to observe how true that is, and by what insensible steps the race of man has passed through successive phases of organization and experience. As he walked down past the world with its crowded centuries and histories, an exclamation of surprise would escape him now and then upon failing to find what he conceived deeply radicated and permanent. He would see venerable institutions passing under the hammer; doctrines, usages, laws, industrial systems, philosophies of life and of the universe all showing signs of decrepitude, things apparently made of rock, iron and adamant, and rooted as the everlasting hills, dissolving in a thaw and passing away in a vapor. The world is like an old garret, filled with belated furniture, hair trunks, ancient andirons, grotesque bonnets and fans, wheezy clocks, faded pictures and screens, chordless harps, outlandish apparel, forgotten literatures, dusty antiquities, and discarded rubbish. How much has been left behind! How much spoiled wheat and cumbrous baggage has been thrown overboard on the voyage! How much has served its day and fallen asleep! How much once indispensable has been shelved and is gathering green mold! "I saw no temple therein."

III. But John's vision has another aspect and application. As already stated, it aptly describes the collective experience of the race thus far, migrating perpetually out of one civilization and social order into a succeeding; but there is more in it than that, for it seems to teach that the soul of man is destined to

come into nearer relation to the living God, the supreme reality. This expectation and high destiny are expressed under a figure, "no temple,"—that is to say, that man's knowledge of God and of the universe is on the way to more subtle refinements and a clearer definition.

"I saw no temple therein." Why not? Probably because there was no longer need for one; I can think of no better reason. It appears to be a prophecy of the yet undeveloped and potential life of man's soul, under some future, inconceivable conditions which await him, when God shall make himself more audible and articulate than now, at least to those that wait for him. John's predictive vision, then, seems to foreshadow a radical change in those forms and statements in which religious ideas are now couched—no temple. Doubtless many of the old battle-grimed banners will be lowered, many tattered flags will be furled, many old war-drums will cease to throb, many watchwords and shibboleths will fall empty and meaningless, many vestments, rituals, pompous sacerdotalisms, and considerable dogmatic theology, mayhap, will shrivel up and go to pieces in that day when the Lord God Almighty shall become the temple of the redeemed race.

Verily, this is one of the spacious and splendid prophecies of the gospel that man is destined to know more about God, about the true, the beautiful, and the good, about the mysterious universe, that he is marching toward —a larger and finer brain, a more cunning hand, a purer heart, and a concord of more harmonious faculties. He is like a mariner on a tedious voyage; the stale biscuit will answer until he has cast anchor and gone ashore to eat the mellow fruits of the land.

Something like this seems to be the teaching of John's vision—that, as the final outcome of present arrangements and after they have done their work, there will be a revelation of God to man, compared to which this earthly life is a dream, a twilight.

IV. If this be at all a correct rendering, what a mere nursery filled with the clack and cries of nurses and children is the Christian church, compared to the adult, spiritual and future state of redeemed men! Christian doctrine, too, say the best of it, how inadequate and unsatisfactory, how many ravelled edges! Surely our creeds must be but angles of the truth, fractional parts, bearing the same relation to unseen reals that the debtor's fifty or sixty cents on the dollar bears to what he actually owes. All we can do yet awhile is to take the likeliest materials at hand and frame the most logic, coherent, moral, and satisfying conception of God and his requirements of which we are capable. Use what you have; believe the gospel delivered to you; take to heart its great promise and prophecy and live by it; this is the time for faith, for patience, for watching. We know enough to answer the present distress. God may not utter any more truth concerning himself yet awhile. Go live by what is revealed in Jesus Christ; it is more than enough. He has power to forgive and to sanctify souls; he is the way of life; do his commandments, live in his spirit, trust in his powerful blood. Forms, creeds, rituals, come and go; no human theology can adequately translate eternal things; no form of worship, whether highly ornate and ceremonial or of the simple, silent sort, can lead one into the Holy of holies; but we can do the will of God, we can hope in his mercy, we can work righteousness, we can act upon our best impulses, we can make articles of faith and forms of worship crutches to lead to a higher landing and to immense horizons; we can believe, obey, and glorify God. We can name the name of Christ and become his disciples. This is enough now; this is all that is possible now.

All life is progress from lower to higher, from accident to essence, from symbol to reality. As man moves forward, this and that drops away, superfluities are discarded, and substantial values are kept. "I saw no temple therein"; "They need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light." It is the same truth in a different phase. Life is in its best sense an everlasting progress and ascension along the course of which this and that falls aside outworn, preposterous, puerile, as the soul waxes in power and reaches a higher altitude and draws nigh unto God. Meantime we need the sun and the moon and the temple. Systems and creeds, forms and ceremonies—these are fixtures of the present time; use them for what they are worth, get all the good out of them they contain, and grow in grace.—Rev. J. Sparhawk Jones, D. D., Philadelphia, Pa.

THE LOOM OF THOUGHT.

Texts: "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he."—Prov. 23: 7.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."—Prov. 4: 23.

The bee is a honey-making creature; it roams over many fields, gathers its harvest from many flowers, comes back laden with honey and wax, and stores them up. That is the bee's sole hope for his future winter. As the honey he makes, so is he. The spider is a web-making creature; out of his own substance he weaves a web in the corner for the capture of food. And that web is the spider's only hope of future sustenance. The caterpillar is a cocoon-making creature; out of his own nature he weaves the silken fibre about himself; weaves therein his own wings. And that is the caterpillar's sole hope of being a future butterfly in the free air. Man is a thinking creature; that is his constitutional function. He eats and drinks, he laughs and weeps; but these are only the accidents of his life. The underlying fabric and fiber of what he is, and is to be, is thought. There is a little weaver up here in the brain sitting at a loom, filling his shuttles with thought-stuff. The rush of his shuttle and the clank of his loom go on all day and much of the night; he weaves even in our sleep, filling his shuttles with dreams and thrusting them into the web he is weaving. He is a tireless creature; asleep or awake he weaves, drunk or sober, angry or pleased, sane or insane, he goes on weaving.

We must think, just as we must breathe as to the body, we must think as to the soul;

it is not optional, it is instinctive. The shuttles are forever flying back and forth; no shuttle goes empty; each one carries a good thought, or a bad thought, like a colored thread, into the web. When that web is finished we call it character—*Karma*. That is what man is.

As the bee must live on the honey he stored up, as the butterfly must wear the wings he himself wove, as the spider must live well or ill by the quality of the web he wove for himself, so man must bear and wear the character and destiny which he wove for himself on the loom of thought.

I. Our thoughts, then, are the characteristic thing in us, the dominant and determining thing. The clothes we wear can be laid off at any time. The man poor in this world's goods, the poorly clad, coming to fortune can be transformed by his tailor in twenty-four hours into the appearance of a prince; but the clothes are not the man; they are no part of him; he is not transformed. The tissues of the body can be sloughed off and changed; they are no part of us. They are finally all removed and dissolved in the dust. But the fabric of thought which we daily weave abides, surviving poverty and riches, sickness and health, death and the dissolution of the grave. This character which we weave out of thought-stuff is immortal. It is not only a part of us; it is essentially us. As he thinketh in his heart so is he.

II. Where does this little weaver in heart and brain get the thought-stuff for his shuttles? Many telegraph wires run under and over our streets, over the mountains and under the oceans, coming from scenes of war and of peace, of industry and of learning, of sorrow and of joy, each carrying some swift current. These wires are gathered at last into some central office of many clinking instruments. The operator translates these currents into intelligence, and sends them out in the form of messages of commerce, of war, of crime, or of love. So our five senses are main wires going out into the world about us, gathering observations, sensations, and experience from the streets of the city, the scenes of the country, the companions we meet, the books we read, the pictures at which we look. Another wire goes down, like an ocean cable, into the depth of our own nature, bringing up mysterious messages given by our own consciousness, speaking of God and good, of right and wrong, and of judgment to come. Thus there are wires from heaven above, on which God and good angels are sending messages; wires from hell below, on which the devil and his angels are sending suggestions, promptings; wires from men and women about us, conveying subtle trains of thoughts and of feeling. And the heart of man is the central office into which these wires run, pouring in there this raw material of thought-stuff.

III. And this busy weaver up here takes what you give him; he is not particular; it is not his province to discriminate; he puts into his shuttles just what you first put into the bins. He steadily fills his shuttles with that which you give him, good or bad, and steadily weaves it for you. The old weaver wove the rags our grandmothers gave him into a carpet or a rug; the weaver arranged the rags as to color, he did not choose the strips themselves; the thrifty housewife did that with care before sending them to him. With careful hand she chose what was wool and rejected what was cotton; chose what was desirable, rejected what was undesirable in color; knowing that the weaver would work up only what she gave him, and all that she gave him. And being woven he would send it home to please or to plague her all the days of her life. She kept that rag-bag with all diligence, for out of it came the issues of her home.

On these wires come thoughts good and bad. But we are not at the mercy of this incoming mass of thought-stuff. If the message is not to your interest you can hang up your telephone and let it ring. You can stuff the bell and silence even the ringing. You can switch off your telegraph instrument and let the current pass or go into the ground. So in the central office of heart and brain we can accept or reject the messages coming in upon us; we can shut our eyes, close our ears, we can refuse our attention. In the republic of the brain there are legislative faculties, the reason, the conscience, and the will. We can call a congress of these faculties to pass on these incoming suggestions, to accept them or reject them, to say what we shall put into the weaver's bin and what we shall not put in. Master among these faculties stands the will, with its high prerogative of choice. We have the right and power to keep our hearts with all discriminating diligence. For once in, they mingle in the web of character, and once there they surely appear again in the final issue and tissue of character. As he thinketh in his heart so is he.

IV. By our thoughts we are judged. We judge other men by their deeds, for that is all we can see. Even then, we take the deed only as an index of what the thought and motive may be. The deed is but the thought completed and hung out as a sign of what the weaver is doing in his heart. We judge a tree by its fruits; but the fruit is just the sap of the tree woven into the outward form of an apple or a pear.

We judge ourselves by our thoughts. We know the parentage of the deed. We know that the deed existed in thought before it existed in action. We know it was woven on this inner loom. We know with what we filled the shuttles before it was exhibited in the web.

V. The primary and ultimate conflict of moral character therefore lies in this region of our thought. There are ten thousand thoughts that do not go out in deeds. There are many blossoms on the cherry tree that do not become fruit. By natural selection the tree chooses what blossoms it shall mature into cherries. By spiritual selection we choose what thoughts shall be accepted and matured into action. Yet even the thought not matured into deed may be an abiding thread in the web. The cherished thought may be prevented from becoming the outward deed by worldly prudence, by care for reputation, by lack of opportunity; but the thought itself is

ours, and appears in the web of character. Keep thine heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. The door to be watched by the strongest and sharpest of guards, is not the door by which the finished thought goes out in deeds; but the door by which the raw material goes in to be worked up by this weaver into the web of character.

The most marvellous truth of Christianity is that the heart can be cleansed, the character changed. Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool. Who are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Such miracles of inward change we see taking place every day. It may take place in our own souls today if we will. The mercy of God has not ceased from among men; the blood of the Lamb has not lost its cleansing secret; the Holy Spirit has not grown weary in the washing of regeneration. —Rev. Robert Mackenzie, D. D., New York.

RECOVERY OF THE LOST REVELATION.

Text: "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the Lord."—2 Kings 22: 8.

Hilkiah came to Shaphan and said: "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the Lord."

Josiah was then king of Judah. He began to reign at the early age of eight, and it is recorded of him that "he walked in the way of David his father," and "turned not aside to the right hand or to the left."

The immediate result of the discovery was remarkable.

The king called the people and priests together and standing on a platform read "all the words of the Book of the Covenant which had been found in the house of the Lord." The result of the reading was a solemn agreement to walk in the ways of Jehovah.

Here on a small scale we have exhibited a picture of what the Bible has done and is yet capable of doing on the larger stage of general history. It has quickened and intensified religious activity, has stimulated and prompted national reform, has inspired and kindled literary genius, and has aroused and exalted the energies and ambitions of multitudes.

There is a sense in which it is true that the Bible is a lost book today, and is in danger of being yet further hidden from general view by accumulating rubbish of one kind or another.

The old picture of Martin Luther, standing before a copy of the Scriptures carefully chained to a wall in a crypt, is suggestive. The gospel then did not have free course. It was not only bound with iron, but it was sunken from the eyes of the common people in the inexplorable depth of the dead languages. The Roman Church boasts that through the dark ages she safely preserved the Word of God. So she did. She kept it securely locked up in an unknown tongue, and fastened by chains in her vaulted chambers. It is her boast that she kept, and it is the higher boast of Protestants that they gave; and had Catholicism done so possibly the world would never have been afflicted with the dark ages. It is singular that she has never yet felt the shame that is involved in her withholding from the masses the volume God bestowed on them for their guidance and comfort. Wyclif, Tyndale, Erasmus, Reuchlin, Luther, Melancthon and the Westminster divines found the old book in the Temple, rescued it from an enormous rubbish heap of traditions and decrees, and restored it to the world through the magnificent translations which they made. Then modern history began.

Tremendous are the issues of the hour growing out of the present critical agitation. The Bible is once more becoming a lost revelation, and its recovery a concern of the highest import.

I. The Bible is partly lost beneath the rubbish of wild interpretations. This dangerous pursuit is not modern and is as old as man's presumption and folly. There have been serious teachers who have solemnly assured the world that Napoleon III is distinctively revealed under certain cryptic signs, that the angel standing with "one foot on the land and the other on the sea" is undoubtedly the United States, and that the church is to be caught up and left suspended, notwithstanding the law of gravitation, for three years in the air! One writer—and he has many followers—has located the to-be-famed field of Armageddon in the Mississippi Valley, and has demonstrated to his own patriotic satisfaction that the combined forces of Europe are to be defeated there by an indignant and righteous American nation. Others have elaborated abstruse systems of symbolisms and correspondences by which we are to make out what the Scriptures teach, not by what they say, but by what the recondite method of determining holds that they ought to say. Into no other book do so many people thrust their crude, bewildering fancies as into the Bible, and when I realize how common a thing it is for multitudes of excellent people to seek their own ideas there while they profess to be seeking God's, I wonder whether they can have as much confidence in the inspiration of the volume as in their own.

The question Christendom has to answer is whether it can afford any longer to have the chief source of its authority and teaching caricatured, which is to all intents and purposes as grave a misdemeanor as to chain it once more to the stone pillar in the vaulted crypt, for in both instances the world is robbed of it as the light of life.

II. The Bible is also partly lost under the weight of specious and glittering idolatries. It is to be remembered that according to the narrative we have been studying, false deities had quite usurped the place of the Holy Oracles. These trifling gods with their symbols filled the Temple, and the worshipper did not even look for anything better or higher. All the while this great treasure of truth was near by and was neither seen nor valued. We, too, have our paltry idolatries, and the commerce or the pleasure we have exalted to the chief place makes us quite indifferent to the diviner gift that lies neglected on the table.

In some instances the shadow of the church

obscures the sacred volume, and we listen to her and ignore it. She fills the entire scene with her processionings, her pomps and display, her pretended apostolic origin and infallibility, and with the finery of her bishops and cardinals, and her dazzling splendor quite eclipses the softer but truer light of God's revelation.

The idolatry of sacerdotalism is pernicious, but in its baneful consequences it may be seconded by what has been termed "the idolatry of the letter." It is possible to turn the attention from the soul of revelation to the form and to be so intent on the latter as to miss the meaning of the former.

III. It must also be added that the Bible is partly lost among the confusion of extreme and contradictory criticisms. This is too large a subject for successful treatment here. I can only undertake to illustrate my thought and perhaps some one else may deal with it in a manner more exhaustive and scholarly.

The plea is sometimes put forth by the higher critics that they are rescuing the Bible from the hands of the Philistines and are restoring it to its true and original form. They think we ought to be grateful. Let us hasten to assure them that we are; that is, we are grateful for whatever they may have done to make good their avowed intention and we are not indifferent to the valuable contributions they have made to a better understanding of the Word of God. We do not challenge their motives, but we must question the soundness of their method; and we do so because we observe that on the whole their labors have resulted in numerous extreme and contradictory criticisms which impair our confidence in the Bible as being in any real sense a divine revelation, and which render obscure or doubtful some of its fundamental teachings.

What the world needs for its noblest, purest, grandest life is inspiration; and as the Bible itself is the product of God-inspired humanity, so it in turn becomes the inspiration of humanity. The inspiration to the truer, sweeter, broader life has been awakened, and to multitudes has ceased to be a reality. Can it be revived? The inspiration can be revived, and will be, if the lost Bible is recovered, and will not be if the book is left to be buried deeper and deeper beneath the conflicting theories and foolish idolatries. This then is of immense importance and cannot safely be delayed. Up explorers, with pick and spade, pursue your investigations in ancient lands that bricks and monuments may confirm, as thus far they have done, God's Holy Word. Up, scholars, search, explore, and translate all documents that verify the sources of our faith. Up, saintly men and women, and bring your experience to the judgment seat, that the marvel working power of the Sacred Book may be proclaimed. Up, all who love humanity, and would have it feel the influence that proceeds from the truth of God and demand that it shall be freed from every bond that binds. Then the recovered Bible shall, like the Spirit dispelling at the beginning the chaotic void and darkness, breathe on the world anew the inspiration which leads to light, order and the triumph of the good. Amen!—The late Rev. George C. Lorimer, D. D.

THE MAN AND THE OPPORTUNITY.

"Buying up the opportunity."—Col. 4:5 (R. V.)

Opportunity is said to mean, literally, something just before the door, a vessel just outside the harbor, something to be caught in the passing. "What is its name?" asked a visitor in a studio, when shown among many gods one whose face was concealed by hair, and which had wings on its feet. "Opportunity," replied the sculptor. "Why is its face hidden?" "Because men seldom know him when he comes to them." "Why has he wings on his feet?" "Because he is soon gone, and once gone, cannot be overtaken."

I. Some men assassinate opportunities. Elah was King of Israel for two years when he came to an ignominious end. He had a servant, Arzah by name, at whose house he spent much time in drinking bouts with boon companions. Knowing this, the bold conspirator Zimri had no difficulty in compassing his ruin and so we read that, "While he was in the house of Arzah, drinking himself drunken, Zimri went in and smote him, and reigned in his stead." On every hand we see young men and women apparently busy assassinating opportunities, and how many descendants of Arzah are still with us—men and women making it easy for the Elahs to sin.

II. Others, again, just miss their opportunities. It is true in the business world. The Mount Morgan Mining Company recently declared another large dividend. Thus far the shareholders have received $22,000,000 in dividends. There is a pathetic page in the history of this most marvelous gold mine. Mount Morgan, in Queensland, Australia, was first owned by a poor herder named Gordon, who eked out a precarious existence by keeping a few cattle. Two brothers named Morgan sought the hospitality of his cottage at nightfall, before whom he set his best store for their entertainment. They told him that they were prospecting for gold, and in turn were interested as he described certain curious green and blue stains all over his mountain, which, to his mind, indicated that it contained copper. The next morning they examined the mountain, and a shower having wetted the rocks, one of the brothers observed indications of gold that fairly startled him. A few weeks later they returned and offered to buy the land from Gordon at $5 per acre. He thought it a good offer and decided to sell. So Gordon drove his cattle to another freehold, and it was reported that he died of poverty, after living long enough to know the value of the prize that he had allowed to slip through his hands.

There are many lost opportunities in the average home. The time to do good and to say appreciative words is now. Paul bids us "buy up the opportunity."

Some years ago a clergyman died in New York, and after his death a company of his brother ministers met to speak of the one who had gone. The widow was present, and as one after another spoke of the dead with words of loving appreciation which had never been used to him in his life, the poor woman, who knew how weary and discouraged he had been, broke out at last: "Oh, gentlemen, why did

you not tell him this while he lived?" There are weary hearts to comfort, there are broken hearts to heal, there are saddened hearts to comfort, there are penitent hearts to forgive, "as the days are going by," and it is woeful to wait until the days are gone and then stand weeping over the lost opportunity.

III. But the supreme event in every life will be the hour when Jesus Christ is crowned Lord of all, hence the supreme opportunity is the privilege we now have of preparing to meet him. But how many are letting this slip. There are opportunities with which it is criminally fatal to trifle. On a cold, stormy night, a passenger train came to a quick halt between two stations. The engine had blown out a cylinder head, and an express was nearly due upon the same track. To the conductor's hurried order that he hurry back with a red light, Joe, the easy, good-natured brakeman, answered laughingly: "There's no hurry. Wait until I get my overcoat." "Don't wait a minute," said the conductor, "for the express is just due." "All right," said Joe, smiling, and his chief hurried forward to look after the needed repairs on the engine. But Joe stopped to drag on his great coat leisurely, and then took another sip from a flat bottle—"a little something to keep the cold out," he said. He had not gone ten paces from his train ere he heard the roar of the on-rushing express above the storm king's wail, and began to run like mad toward the curve in the road, but was too late. In one terrible instant of time the engine of the express had telescoped the cars of the standing train, and the shrieks of the wounded and dying passengers mingled with the hissing steam, came with maddening power to his ears. They found Joe the next day in a barn, not far from the scene of the accident, swinging an empty lantern in front of an imaginary train, and crying: "Oh, that I had." And there is no sadder sound today (for this is a true story), in the asylum which shelters him, than the unceasing moan of poor Joe, as he cries incessantly: "Oh, that I had; Oh, that I had!"

"The best men," says E. H. Chapin, "are not those who have waited for chances, but those who have taken them; besieged the chance; conquered the chance, and made the chance servitor."

Some years ago one of the great life insurance companies of New York City invited a large number of their agents to New York on an excursion, to hold a little convention and talk over ways and means. The agents had a good time and doubtless were much profited by the interchange of views and methods.

One curious fact developed during the session. One agent had such an eye for business that he had succeeded in writing policies on the lives of the barber that shaved him, the elevator man, and the waiter that served him in the restaurant, all employed for years by the insurance company in its great building.

How rebuked should we be by such illustrations of success crowning energetic effort, and stimulated to more persevering success for Christ.

IV. Many are depressed by memories of wasted or lost opportunities, and for such the Gospel has a message of hope.

The history of Peter's restoration and later usefulness will occur to some by way of illustration. The case of Mark is equally encouraging. When he turned back from Paul and Barnabus, refusing to accompany them on that historic first missionary journey, he missed a rare opportunity. Five years later Paul refused to take him with him on his second journey. But does this mean he was a "castaway"? By no means. Ten years after we see him at Rome a voluntary prisoner of the Lord beside Paul, and that he was prized by him is evidenced by the reference to him in which Paul speaks of "Mark (who) is profitable to me in the ministry." Another apostle speaks of him as "my son."

We have all missed opportunities, but has God cut us off? Not yet. For every one he stands ready to turn defeat into victory and "restore unto us the years that the locusts have eaten."—Rev. W. C. King, Vancouver, B. C.

THE CHURCH AND ITS WORKERS.

Text: "He first findeth his own brother Simon," etc.—John 1:41-45.

The work of the church is varied. Every community has its own difficulties, and every church its own problems. But every church in every community has the one object—the salvation of the lost in the scope of its influence. Other objects may be important. They may press heavily, but never is it to be forgotten that the souls of the unsaved people are more important than anything else under the sun. One soul is worth more than a world.

Do not, however, understand me to be indifferent to the world. We must give thought to it, if we would do the best work for souls. The church should be interested in everything that interests humanity. But after all let it be understood forever that the winning of lost men to Christ is the main work of the church. The question with every church, realizing this fact, is: How can the church be best led into this work?

Taking for granted that the other steps, as far as possible, have been duly considered, let us consider a few suggestions concerning the works' side of the soul-winning church.

I. The one essential thing is that the church itself shall feel the burden of the work. Every member, as far as possible, should be made to feel his personal obligation to save the lost.

Andrew found Simon, and brought him to Jesus. Philip found Nathanael, and brought him to Jesus. This is the way to have a soul-winning church.

The pastor must never give up soul-winning until he gets his people fired with the responsibility of being Andrews and Philips.

II. Around every church there are opportunities for soul-winning. Lost people are everywhere. We walk with them and talk with them every day. How important it is for us to show a personal interest in their souls' salvation!

The world has seen its opportunity. Business men used to get along without drummers but now they are as thick as bumble-bees. Once I was spending the night in the mountains. After supper a man came to the home where I was being entertained, and asked per-

mission to come in and spend the night. The kind old farmer took him in. Soon we saw that he was a drummer, and that his business was selling molasses. Before he left the next morning he sold that farmer enough molasses to last him through the season. There were thirteen children in his home, and that meant a good deal of molasses. The drummer went from house to house until he sold to scores of farmers. Shortly after this the local depot agent, or station master, said to me, "Can you tell me what has come over this country?" "Why?" said I. "Oh!" said he, "it seems to me that the whole world has turned to molasses. Just look! Every freight car is loaded with it. I have licked molasses until the bees follow me about." There had been some good personal work done in that country, that was all!

The politicians do the same thing. A few years ago there was a statement made that every doubtful voter in the United States had been interviewed about his vote for president. Just so. But we have been waging a campaign for Jesus two thousand years, and there are millions who have never heard of his saving power. Our neighbors and friends, our own families, perhaps, are unsaved, and yet we have never let ourselves out to save them.

III. It is an easy thing to lead souls to Christ, when we once make up our minds to get at it.

In one of our meetings in New York there was a woman who had never had such experience in church work. She got fired with the possibility of soul-winning, and she went at it. She invited an unsaved lady friend to spend the night with her. That night that girl accepted Christ. This same thing was repeated with others for seven nights, and seven young ladies were led to Jesus in a week. Any Christian can do this. It is not necessary to wait for the protracted meeting. Do it yourself, and do it now. Get some unsaved soul alone, and go right to business. Get them to yield to Christ. Then follow them up until a public profession is made.

IV. Another thing to do is to form mission stations, cottage meetings, drawing-room meetings, street meetings, jail meetings, and the like.

I have watched the making of a queen bee in a hive. The bees simply take an ordinary egg, and feed it with extra good food, and give it extra good care, and from it they develop the magnificent queen.

So in the church. There is ever plenty of material for usefulness. What we want is to give special opportunity, and workers will develop and grow.

There was a man in our church who was not fit for anything in the church. He was a good fellow, but like many others he was good for nothing. One day my assistant, who is a genius at such things, gave him a job of sticking the envelopes in the pew racks every Sunday morning. Never a deacon was fonder of his position. Every Sunday his work was done. It made a new man of him. Soon he could be counted on for anything. He had it in him all the time, but needed a chance to bring it out.

The point I insist upon is that the soul-winning church must use its membership. It won't do to wait for so-called training. The best training for soul-winning is doing it.

It doesn't take brains to lead souls to Christ. That ought to be good news to us preachers. The Holy Ghost wants a ready worker. He will supply what we don't possess, provided we are honest with him in every matter.

There is no reason why any church of average strength should not have from a dozen to a hundred soul-winners.—Rev. Len G. Broughton, D. D.

SERVING GOD IN OUR HOMES.

Text: "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."—Joshua 24:5.

If there is one thing I love more than another in this Biblical character, it is his courage—courage founded on faith. He had such a faith in God and such a deep sense of duty towards him that he dared to be in the minority in serving him. It is but a few of us who dare do this. We want to be in the majority. The man who dares do right must often stand alone. Those who have left a deep impression for good upon the world have often had occasion to remark with the Christ, "Alone, and yet I am not alone." Loneliness is invariably the penalty of true service and of true greatness. But it is always a loneliness of a peculiar kind—loneliness in the company of God and his hosts. I would rather be alone and have God with me than have millions on my side without him. So with Joshua. He was a man who dared to serve God alone.

This is the kind of men and women, especially heads of families, we need in our Christian country and in our Christian homes today. People who dare be in the minority serving God. People who will make their homes sanctuaries unto him, notwithstanding the character of the community in which they live, or, maybe, the ungodly character of those who make up the household, and the many other obstacles which may be thrown in their way. The head of the family under God is supreme in his own house and should make his rights and his influence felt. How can we, as heads of families, best serve God at home?

I. First, by example. God says to all heads of families, learn first to show piety at home. So live that those who depend most upon you and those who know you best will have confidence in you and long to emulate your character. Parents should so live before their children that what the children see at home should counteract what they hear on the streets. Nothing is so harmful in its tendency upon children as inconsistency in the life of those in authority over them. Especially is this the case where endearment is joined to authority. Parents, above all, should, in the presence of their offspring, "abstain from all appearance of evil," and think of "whatsoever things are lovely and of good report." Every Christian father should be able to say to his children, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

II. Second, by being kindly affectionate towards those under our authority. A friend who has had some experience with the training of boys said to me the other day: "I have never been able to get work from boys by scolding them, but by using tenderness and

firmness combined." Yet how many heads of families make a failure of it just at this point? They know not the art of kindness, which is also the art of Christian living. More of us should emulate the old divine, who said: "I am resolved that nobody shall beat me in kindness, so long as it remains as cheap as it is." Kindness has a wonderful transforming power. Those who have studied the passion of animals tell us that there is scarcely a brute which cannot be tamed by it.

III. Third, by instruction. Every head of a family should act the prophet in his home. Religious education of children is God's way of perpetuating vital religion in the home and in the community. No other agency of the church or of the Sunday School can relieve the parent from his duty or compensate for his neglect of it. God's command to the Israelite was: "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." What a message to Christians! Let the heads of families in our churches heed it. If you want to rid the world of infidelity, turn your attention to those under your care at home and familiarize them with the truths about God in Christ, his goodness, wisdom, love and power, as well as his fidelity, so that they may learn to love, to obey and to trust him.

IV. Fourth, by family devotions. Teach your children to ask a blessing before meals. If they know no such form of prayer, teach them one and urge them to repeat it with you. Have the word of God brought to the table and read for spiritual instruction. Let your children know what the Lord has to say to them. Pray yourself and teach your children to pray in the family, that God may bless your household and that his presence and holiness may be felt.—Rev. R. E. Williams.

POSITIVE CHRISTIANS.

"Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love."—1 John 4: 7, 8.

The highest idea of Christian living ever obtained by many people is a purely negative one. To them the Christian life is simply a defensive warfare. They are entirely concerned (so far as they are concerned at all) with how they shall not sin. They present to us the picture of a soldier on the field of battle with a scared look on his face, looking right and left to avoid a stray bullet, while he runs as fast as ever he can from the field of action. To be out of temptation, to be freed from the tendency to backslide, is the largest conception of the life in Christ which these brethren seem to possess. And this, I venture to say, is just the reason we do have so many halting and backsliding professors. The trouble is they are more concerned with what they shall not do than with what they shall do. They define righteousness to be—not a positive doing right, but a simple not doing of wrong; and, of course, with such a notion of Christian living there can be no progress; and where there is no progress there must be retrogression. The field that does not yield a harvest of fruit always yields a harvest of weeds.

What the Bible calls for is positive Christians—men of Christ-like manliness; men, who, while they believe and act out the principle "resist the devil, and he will flee from you," also believe that God has called them to carry on an aggressive warfare in the enemy's country. We should hardly entertain a lofty opinion of that general as a military genius who had no higher aim than simply not to be defeated. Can we entertain a higher opinion of the man or woman who is content with a mere escape from the wiles of the devil? The truth of the matter is, the positive Christian is never seriously troubled with these negative ideas. The man whose hands and heart are full of his Master's work, who is toiling indefatigably in his Master's vineyard, will not be troubled much by the old adversary. Instead of resisting the devil he has become the aggressor, and the devil is compelled to resist him or flee. We certainly have had enough passivity in the Christian life. What we want especially in these stirring times is men of activity, of thorough consecration, of intelligent comprehension of the needs of their fellows. That kind of piety which expends itself in expressions of mock humility, which is ever bemoaning its own shortcomings, and yet never making the first attempt in a manly way to do some practical good to mankind, which is all talk and no work, we have had more than enough of. The positive Christian, then, is a man who lives the real and noble Christian life. He has so much to do for others that he forgets himself; and where a man forgets himself he will not be troubled with selfishness, and when selfishness is absent sin has no chance.

A few of the characteristics of the positive Christian may be enumerated:

I. He will relieve as far as he can the temporal needs of his fellows. It is an easy thing to say to those in distress of any kind, "Depart in peace; be ye warmed and filled," and albeit it is a cheap kind of benevolence. At the same time "what doth it profit?" If that is the type of our Christianity we need not worry about the heathen; we have nothing to give them that they do not possess already. Every Christian hopes and prays for the conversion of sinners; but that Christian who does not care anything for his neighbors' bodies cannot care very much for their souls. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Of course, if God has given you no power to relieve these necessities, the requirement is not upon you.

II. He will try to help others to try to realize their worthy aims. If a deserving young man comes to you longing for an education, thirsting for knowledge, but has his way hedged about him on every side, so that it seems impossible for him to realize his aim, if you are a positive Christian and possess money or influence, you will interest yourself in that young man, and leave no stone unturned until he is in a fair way to the realization of his desires. And this you will do for any one with a worthy end in view. The most eloquent

divine never preached more effective sermons than the positive and practical Christian preaches in this tangible way, for he sets in motion a train of influences which will be felt forever. Many a man has been brought to Christ by finding himself the object of such genuine Christian love. The world does not do things that way.

III. He will try by every means to bring others to Christ. Realizing that out of Christ the world is perishing, he will feel like the apostle when he cried, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel." He will therefore do a great deal more than merely pray for the unconverted at the weekly prayer meetings. He will seek them out at their homes, interest himself in their secular plans, enter with them into their innocent enjoyments, gain their hearts, and then pour into them all the earnest, loving entreaties and invitations of the Gospel, coupled with his own affectionate appeal to accept the blessed Saviour at once. The sinner thus approached will prove a faithful listener; and the positive Christian, relying upon God's promise and the aid of the Holy Spirit, will succeed every time. These are but a few of the many ways in which positive Christianity will show itself.

The world, brethren, is tired of everything that savors of cant. It is a good deal more ready to accept Christ than we believe it to be, if we offer to it the veritable Christ, manifesting himself as he said he would in the lives of his people. The world, when we ask it to follow Christ, says to us, and says properly: "Show your credentials." And what do we offer? Do we say we attend church and prayer meeting and have a class in the Sabbath school, and pay our pew rent, and sometimes in public offer prayer? Is that all? The world bids us read our Bibles, and conform to the practical precepts found therein, before offering it what it does not clearly see that we practically possess ourselves. Let us remember that Christianity is not a doctrine, nor a sentiment, nor an idea, but an eternal principle of love originating in the heart of God for man, and expressing itself in the heart of man for his fellow.—Rev. Paul F. Sutphen, D. D.

"SIN COMPELS SEPARATION."

Text: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."—Luke 5: 8.

Here is a very remarkable confession, and and a very remarkable prayer. The confession is, "I am a sinful man, O Lord." The prayer is, "Depart from me." The confession would not be so very remarkable in itself, if it were not evidently the expression of a deep sense of sin. That is very rare in these days.

I. Why is it that there are so few people in these days that seem to have any deep sense of sin? I am speaking, now, of the unsaved—those that are not the disciples of Jesus Christ.

1. Because, in the first place, there is very little right thinking about sin itself. If you ask a man whether he is a sinner, he understands you to mean by that, a great, a flagrant, an outbreaking transgressor. If you tell him that he is a great sinner in the sight of God, he thinks perhaps that you mean to accuse him of being a blasphemer, a perjurer, a thief, an adulterer, a murderer. Sin may not break out in violent trampling on the ten commandments; but Almighty God, looking with omniscient eye beneath the veil of outward propriety and even morality, sees lurking in souls the desperate and deadly hatred of himself.

2. Then again, there is a large bulk of sins which some of us never even think of, and which may be called sins of omission, that is, things that are left undone.

Did you ever notice this fact—that three of the greatest arraignments in the whole word of God on the subject of sin have to do with what is not done?

3. Again, we have not a right conception of sin. We are like people born blind that have not the proper sense of sight, or like people born deaf that have not the proper sense of hearing, or like people born without proper feeling or sensibility, so that they do not perceive as men perceive that have proper eyes, and proper ears, and proper organs. And what is more than that, we become more and more callous about sin by familiarity with it.

4. Then again there is a power in sin to deceive a man. Remember what the Word of God itself says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." Yes, the heart makes the theology. Why do men like to believe that they are not sinners? Because it makes them uncomfortable to think that they are.

II. How can we get free from this wrong conception, lack of perception, and snare of deception with regard to sin and its nature? How can we come to know that we are sinners, and to see ourselves somewhat as God sees us?

1. In the first place, we must receive God's verdict concerning us. If you will take the Bible testimony you will see what God thinks of men. It is a fearfully solemn thing to get God's verdict.

2. Once more, in order to come to the sense of my sin, it is necessary that I should set up alongside of myself God's perfect standard of truth and life, and duty and conduct. One of the common things that men do—and it is a piece of folly and of wickedness—is to compare themselves among themselves, and measure themselves by themselves.

When Peter was reminded of the power or knowledge of this being who was beside him—for it was evidently the power or knowledge of God—he thought of the moral character of God, and especially the divine holiness, and so he thought of his own sin in comparison; and this drew from him the confession, "I am a sinful man; O Lord," and it wrung from him the prayer, "Depart from me."

III. And now, naturally, the thought is suggested that conscious sin brings conscious sense of separation. If, by any means, the conviction of sin be produced in any soul, the immediate effect is that there is the consciousness of ill-desert: "I deserve to be separated from all holy beings." This is a very solemn thought, and it is a key to many great mysteries.

IV. We have here a key that unlocks many of the mysteries of the future state. The world is full of people who dispute the great

Bible doctrine of the punishment of the finally ungodly and the impenitent. There is every method taken to get rid of this unpleasant doctrine. Some boldly deny it. Others try to inculcate a doctrine of restoration—some method of universal salvation, some atonement for sin in a kind of purgatory, with deliverance from purgatorial pains and hell fire after the period of purgation has passed by. But I pray you consider, just for a moment, whether there be not in the human soul a revelation which goes side by side with the revelation in the Word of God. Are there not materials in the human soul which, out of themselves, could build a hell if there were no hell revealed? The brothers of Joseph stood before him in the palace of Pharaoh, and as yet Joseph had not revealed himself to them, and they did not know that it was Joseph. No voice spoke to them from above. God did not accuse them. No man arraigned them for guilt in selling their brother into Egypt. But observe this: "They said among themselves, we are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear. Therefore is this distress come upon us."

What were the elements of this self-accusation? First, memory: "We saw the anguish of his soul," twenty years ago, when he was put in that pit, and "he besought us, and we would not hear." Then, in the second place, there was a conscience: "We are verily guilty concerning our brother." And then, reason: "Therefore is this distress come upon us." If you should go into the next world with your memory and your conscience and your reason uncleansed by the power of the blood of Christ, those three elements, that you possess in your own constitution, would build a hell for you in any part of the universe of God.

Yes, Judas went to his own place. Notice that, first, every man has his own place in this world and in the next.

Second, every man makes his own place in this world and in the next.

Third, every man finds his own place in this world and in the next.

Fourth, every man feels that it is his own place when he gets there.

Suppose that I take filings of several metals and sprinkle them in front of me, and I pass through them a magnet. The magnet takes up all the filings of iron and steel, and rejects the brass, and even the silver and the gold. Why? Because there is a magnetic affinity between the magnet and the steel and iron. Suppose I take various substances, and put them in a vial together and shake them up violently, and then set the vial down. If there are substances in that vial that are alike and have affinity for each other, they will combine, but otherwise they will refuse to combine, just as oil and water do. That is chemical affinity. And just as there is magnetic and chemical affinity so there is moral and spiritual affinity among souls. Every man goes to his own place—the place to which, by his own sin or his own regenerate character, he belongs. And there is only one place that you can go to, and that is where you by affinity belong. When you are let go by death you go to your own company. There was a holy man in New England who, being asked, when he was dying, "Are you going to heaven?" looked up and said, "Where else could I go?" It was not pride, it was not vain glory, it was not self-confidence, but it was the knowledge that Jesus was his Saviour, and his whole soul longed after Jesus, and he knew that when the bars of his cage were broken, he would mount, like a freed bird, to see the face of his Lord and make his rest in his presence.

V. Now, once more. As I have tried to show you that self-condemnation makes it impossible that you dwell with God if you are not like him, and that your affinities make it impossible that you should seek the society of God if you do not sympathize with his nature, so let me add that the glory of God would turn heaven into hell if you had not the nature of a child of God. Did you ever read that tale in old Roman history of Regulus, the Roman senator, being taken captive by the Carthaginians in one of the Punic wars? Carthage sent him to Rome with humiliating terms of peace, and he agreed that if he did not effect the peace with the Romans he would go back and put himself under the control of the Carthaginians, and submit to their punishment. He went back, and what did the Carthaginians do with him? They inflicted on him the most awful torture that was known in ancient times. They cut off his eyelids; they bound him with his back to the earth and his face to the heavens; and from the time that the sun rose in the morning till the time that the god of day sank behind the hills in the evening, those eyes had to bear the unclouded blaze of sunshine, until the very powers of vision were paralyzed and the eyes were hopelessly blinded. The elements of this awful torture were just these—an open eye and a pure glory!

I beseech you, do not deceive yourselves. There are just two places where you can find out that you are a sinner. One is at the throne of grace on earth; the other is at the throne of glory hereafter. If you go into your secret place and shut the door; if you bow down your knees before the face of the Almighty God and say, like the little Highland maid, "O Lord, show me myself," he will open the eyes of your understanding, and he will show what a sinner you are. In the first revelation of your own unfitness to dwell with him you may, like Peter, be tempted to cry out, "O Lord, I am a sinful man. Depart from me." But the Lord, like Joseph, when he drew toward his conscience-smitten brethren, and said, "Come near to me, I pray you," will throw his arms of love and mercy around you, and will say to you, "I will not depart from thee; neither shall thou depart from me," for it was to save just such penitent sinners as you that Jesus died and rose again.

But if you hide from yourself the fact of your sin and guilt, and try to persuade yourself that you are safe while you are unsaved; if you first learn, at the great white throne of glory above, what a sinner you are, you will then and there be speechless, and the King on the throne shall say, "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity."—Rev. Arthur T. Pierson, D. D.

The Homiletic Year—January.

G. B. F. Hallock, D. D.

NEW YEAR.

NEW YEAR TEXTS.

The old manner of life.—Matt. 4: 16; Luke 15: 14, 17; Eph. 2: 1-3, 12; Col. 3: 8-10; 1 Pet. 2: 9, 10.

Forgetting things behind.—Matt. 13: 44; Luke 9: 62; 2 Cor. 5: 17; Phil. 3: 12-14; Heb. 11: 14-16.

I press on.—Prov. 4: 18; 2 Cor. 7: 1; Gal. 6: 9; Eph. 4: 13-15; Phil. 4: 8.

Looking unto Jesus.—Gal. 2: 20; Col. 2: 6, 7; 3: 1-3; 2 Tim. 2: 1; Heb. 12: 1, 2.

The renewed life.—Isa. 40: 31; Gal. 5: 24, 25; Eph. 5: 8-11; Phil. 1: 9-11; Heb. 13: 20, 21.

PUTTING OFF AND PUTTING ON.

Eph. 4: 22-24.

The trees of this January have pushed off their old, useless, disfiguring, dead leaves, and now their branches are bare. Perhaps, when this first happened, someone might have said to the trees. "Why don't you hold on to the old leaves? They are ugly, to be sure, but they are all the covering you have." God knew better. He knew that the old must go before the new can come, the evil be driven out before the good can enter.

That is why Paul, in speaking about the transformation that must befall every Christian, gives as the first step the putting away of "the old man"—the bad habits, the base words, the rash and impure and foolish thoughts. Here is a young man in a business that requires him to do unnecessary work on Sunday. Shall he give it up, not knowing where his living is to come from? Yes. Not even God can put a new coat on a man till he has taken off the old coat.

Suppose a beggar were taken into a royal palace and told to strip himself and bathe and then leave his dirty rags where they were and enter the next room, where he would find awaiting him a suit of cloth of gold. Would he not be foolish not to obey? It is more than a king who tells us to do just the same thing—to drop at once from our lives whatever is evil, being sure that God will put in its place something infinitely better.

That is the most fitting work we can do at this New Year's season.

DROP SOME THINGS.

"Two boys were crossing a railroad bridge, when one slipped and fell. His comrade caught him and held him over the stream, but a fishing-pole he was carrying had caught in the ties so that he could not be drawn back. 'Drop that pole,' cried the rescuer, 'or I can't save you.' And just so there are many worthless things to which we are clinging at the beginning of this year, and we must drop them if we want to be safe and go on happily through its months."

YOUR OPPORTUNITY.

"We have all heard about the storm-driven ship whose crew was half frantic for water. At last another ship came near, and they cried, 'Water! water! we are perishing with thirst.' 'Dip down into the ocean,' was the answer; for they were off the Amazon, which hurls its mighty flood of fresh water far out into the briny Atlantic. In this same way there are many who are longing for a fresh start, a new chance, who have the opportunity every day of their lives if they will only reach out and take it. 'Every day is a new beginning.'"

NEW YEAR PARTNERSHIP.

"Many a young business man will be received into partnership this new year, and will be proud and happy. But long ago the Lord of the universe offered to take you and me into partnership with him. If we have not accepted the great offer, this New Year's time is the best time to do it."

STRAIGHT ON.

"Going to a railroad station and boarding a train and being on the cars when they are in motion may not help us at all. The question is where we mean to go and whether the cars are taking us there. We all get a start with the new year, whether we want to or not. It will take us somewhere. But the start that counts is when we set out for a goal worth reaching and determine to keep headed straight for it."

NEW YEAR AMBITION.

"It is not enough merely to form an ambition; there are some ambitions that never can be attained by us, no matter how earnestly we set about our task. But there is one ambition which is within everyone's reach, and that is the ambition to become holy. If we set out to obtain that object this New Year, we are sure of achieving results."

PAINT YOUR VISIONS.

"Let us form ideals for our New Year. Once Raphael was asked how he painted his marvellous pictures. He answered, 'I dream dreams and I see visions, and then I paint my dreams and my visions.' Our New Year will be better if we have dreams about it, and then set out and paint them upon the canvas of experience."

START AT THE BURNING BUSH.

"Moses got his new start at the burning bush. He had known God before, had boldly dared and suffered for him, but at the burning bush he caught a new vision of God and

went forth to dare and suffer more than ever before. That is what we need in starting out on this New Year—some new vision of God. We can have it if we will."

MAKE THE YEAR FAIR.

"In one of his helpful and inspiring poems Robert Browning warns us against forming unreasonable and impossible plans for our life:—

'The common problem, yours, mine, every one's,
Is—not to fancy what were fair in life,
Provided it could be—but, finding first
What may be, then find how to make it fair,
Up to our means; a very different thing.'"

THE NEW YEAR START.

"James Buckham has written a poem which pictures the joyous spirit in which we should make our start in the new year:—

'Go, sin no more.' These are the Saviour's words.
The past is past. True life is here and now.
With seal of God's forgiveness on thy brow
Greet life's new morning, happy as the birds
That lift their songs when sunshine fills the air;
For God is love, and love is everywhere!"

WATCH SMALL THINGS.

"When William Lloyd Garrison became a Christian he wanted his Christianity to reach into all details of his life. His handwriting, for instance, was very poor, and he set out to better it, making every letter with care, so that before long his penmanship became remarkable for its distinctness and beauty. A new start like this even in small things would make better Christians."

ANOTHER YEAR.

"Let us not be afraid to start this new year because the beginnings must be small. When Booker T. Washington made his start at Tuskegee the school was held in a vacant hen-house, and the roof leaked so that a scholar had to hold an umbrella over his head when it rained. Now it costs $82,000 a year just for the necessary expenses of running that school. God will see to the rest of it, if we only make a good start."

TRAVEL-STAINS. A MEDITATION FOR THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

"He that is washed," etc.—John 13: 10.

The feet-washing scene is pregnant with many suggestions. Has Christ cleansed us? Are we "clean every whit"?

I. The Christian even after a short journey has need to cleanse himself of the "travel stains" which he cannot help contracting on the way. Looking back on another year's journey do we not all realize the truth of this?

1. There are dusty or miry highways for the business man.

2. The home is not free from stains.

3. Society may soil.

The books we read, the company we keep, the influence of the social atmosphere which we breathe—all these things bear upon us with a pressure and an influence which can be resisted only by constant renewals and cleanings.

II. The great Soul-cleaner is the one who alone can keep us "clean every whit." During the coming year let us see to it that we cultivate his Divine fellowship, and remember the condition laid down here, that we have no part in it if we fail to maintain a childlike willingness to submit to our Master's purifying touch, which is also the mark of his saving power.—Rev. E. Griffith-Jones.

THE END OF THE YEAR.

Text: "We spend our years as a tale that is told."—Ps. 90: 9.

No part of the ancient Scriptures is less obsolete than this Psalm. Human life has not yet brightened up into a scene of joy and triumph. And though our years pass so rapidly, they may also be spent in a trifling manner, and with little result of value.

I. The passing of the years should teach us that it is only through the medium of God that we can effectually attempt any of the most important things.

II. Gratitude should arise in our hearts for all the past mercies of God; and this gratitude should be forceful enough to prompt us to better service in the future.

III. Our last year has added to an irrevocable account. It has passed into the records of heaven.

IV. Other persons have made nobler use of this year than we have. Why were the day, the week, the month, of less value in our hands than in theirs?

V. This further experience of the world should have detached us more fully from it. Has it had this effect?

VI. The year departed may admonish us of the stealthiness of the flight of time!—Rev. John Foster.

SEASONABLE OPPORTUNITY.

"There is a time to every purpose under heaven."—Eccl. 3: 1.

GOD'S PRESENCE A GUARANTEE OF NEW YEAR PROSPERITY.

"And the Lord was with him and he prospered whithersoever he went forth."—2 Kings 18: 7.

In Hezekiah we have a beautiful and powerful example of a truly prosperous man, and in him we see what are the conditions of prosperity (verses 5, 6).

I. God's presence in the heart removes the hindrances to prosperity. (a) Sin. (b) Self. (c) Selfishness.

II. God's presence in the heart facilitates prosperity. It promotes (a) Spiritual growth. (b) Spiritual progress. (c) Spiritual service. Growing in grace, that growth finding ex-

pression in increased devotion and zeal and leading on to service.

III. God's presence in the heart a guarantee of prosperity. A real life means prosperity. Of this God's presence is the guarantee.

IV. God's presence in the heart is the pledge of permanent blessing. If it can be said of us, "And the Lord was with him," then it will certainly be said, "And he prospered whithersoever he went forth."—Rev. John W. Veevers.

THE ETERNAL PAST.

Text: Ecclesiastes 3:15: "God requireth that which is past."

We are coming to the end of the year. It is naturally a time for serious thought.

Let us make some impressive observations concerning the past.

I. The past is real. On your way to church this morning, you passed over considerable ground and left behind you numerous buildings. Every foot of the way is there yet, and the structures have not disappeared.

II. The past is unchangeable. Every thought; every word; every deed. We can no more alter what we have put into it than a man can withdraw his tones and words recorded by the phonograph. "What I have written I have written." The past is beyond our reach.

III. The past is ours. The old year is gone. No, where is it? In your heart. In my heart. The past is just as really ours as the present garment we wear holds within its warp and woof the material of which it was made.

All of life is, in a true sense, one. Human life is a chain. Each link a year. Each period is tied to what has gone before and to what is to come after. I stand at the center of the Brooklyn Bridge. That center is the present. The part behind me is the past. The part before me is the future. The portion over which I have passed is yesterday. Where I stand is today. The portion before me is forever. We are literally the product of the past, and what we are today foreshadows what we will be tomorrow.

Our knowledge and skill come out of the past. Our civilization has come from that source. I have no sympathy whatever with the flings of modern pygmies at the giants of the past. The past is our mother and we are her children.

The past is ours. In a true sense, man is his own recording angel. He can make the record, but he can neither change nor blot it out. What we have thought and felt and done is imbedded in the very fibre of our being—registered in the nerves and muscles and tissues of the body, imprinted upon the memory and stamped upon the soul.

IV. The past is eternal. "That which hath been is now, and that which is to be hath already been." The earth is round. Two persons starting from the same point in opposite directions will come together again. So a man starts out here toward eternity. When he gets there, he will confront the point at which he started and recall all that lies between.

We are immortal here and now. Time is the beginning of eternity. We are already in the eternal world.

V. "God requireth that which is past." This suggests blessings recounted.

Every hour has been graciously burdened with God's favors.

VI. "God requireth that which is past." This suggests opportunities of usefulness.

What use have we made of our talents? Every hour we have lived has been an added responsibility. We have had all the time there was, and each moment of it has been freighted with eternal import. Our neglects are ours with all their attendant consequences.

VII. "God requireth that which is past." This further suggests increased diligence.

I believe in New Year's resolutions. The man who does, is the man who has resolved to do. All desire to do, and to be better, but it requires resolution to execute the desire.—Rev. Charles C. Carson.

SEALED ORDERS: A THOUGHT FOR THE NEW YEAR.

Text: "And he went out not knowing whither he went."—Heb. 11:8.

Launching out into a new year is setting sail under "sealed orders." All life, which is but moving into the unknown future, is going out with sealed orders.

I. By sealed orders we mean those things which we must take on faith till God gives us sight; we take the seal to mean what the government seal means, one that cannot be opened till the appointed time.

Too many prefer to know all before they will do anything, they refuse to go out under sealed orders, but in war those who refuse to sail when such an order is given are traitors; in the Christian life those who will not await God's time for his revelation are unreasonable doubters. God veils the future for the good of the kingdom and our good.

II. The Father does not want to send us out under sealed orders simply that he may have a surprise for us by and by. We all may rest assured that he will reveal the truth just as fast as we can receive it, but no faster. The reason for this necessity lies in humanity, because the natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit.

III. The kingdom of heaven is sealed, locked, barred, and so it must be till God is known. God does not open his home to strangers. To know him is life eternal; God invites all to know him and the process of knowledge is a breaking of seals as fast as we are competent and have arrived at the right place.

IV. Going under sealed orders is the way of all progress. It requires faith and faith is a confidence that the one who gives the orders knows what is best now and will disclose more that will be best tomorrow. God's promises are sealed orders; all truth is sealed. When the Master says he has many things to

tell which we cannot bear now, it is only to invite our trust.

V. But God's promises are not sealed forever, save to those who choose to leave them so. If all truth is sealed, it is sealed only so long as we are incompetent to break the seal. "He that willeth to do the will of the Father shall know of the teaching."

Providence isn't a vague something to refer to when it suits our convenience. Providence is the way of life to the Christian. It is sealed now, but the longer we live the more we understand it, just as the boy in school breaks the seals and moves on and up into the realms of knowledge. Half the failures of life are due to a premature breaking of the seals. A restless impatience always hinders real progress.

VI. The would-be Christian who sets sail with a bundle of sealed orders to be opened in regular succession will miss the goal of life and drift into some other port unless he follows his instructions. Avoid the ports not mentioned in the instructions God has given for the new year. Elijah once erred in this matter and God said: "What doest thou here, Elijah?" Paul moved on from port to port, not knowing whither he went, but the Spirit told him when to break the seals and Paul obeyed—and succeeded.

VII. God is leading us all "to a place which he will show." Every new opportunity is a port for special orders from God; then break the right seal and God's will will be made clear. Difficult problems will be ours to solve, but the Master has put into our possession an order that will clear the difficulty. At each port, stop, break the appropriate seals and find the orders of the King, then you can bear what would now crush you. Then proceed.

Say with Newman: "Lead kindly Light, I do not ask to see the distant scene, one step enough for me," and with another: "I would rather walk in dark with God, than go alone in the light; I would rather walk with him by faith, than go alone by sight."—Rev. Charles E. Rhodes, D. D., Buffalo, N. Y.

Send for this Calendar

The Pittsburgh Bank for Savings, of Pittsburgh, Pa., will mail to any address, on receipt of a two-cent stamp, a copy of their Art Calendar for 1905. The subject is Carl J. Blenner's famous painting, "Reverie," which is faithfully reproduced by the photo engraving three-color process in all the delicate colors and tints of the original. It is one of the most artistic productions of the Art Preservative, and undoubtedly there will be a great demand for the same. When writing request the Bank to mail you a copy of their new Banking by Mail booklet No. S-28, that is if you are seeking a safe and profitable investment, with a strong, old established bank, for your savings or surplus funds.

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Prayer Meeting Department.

AUGUSTUS NASH.

THE MAN SICK OF THE PALSY.

Mark 2: 1-12.

1 What was going on in the home of Jesus? Luke 5: 17
2 How did the palsied man get to him? 4
3 What did his friends hope Jesus would do?
4 Why did he forgive the man's sins? 5
5 What was worrying the man? John 5: 14
6 How did the Pharisees argue? 6, 7
7 What was wrong with their reasoning? 6, 7
8 How did Jesus demonstrate his authority? 8-12

THE IMPOTENT MAN.

John 5: 1-15.

1 Why was Jesus in Jerusalem at this time? 1
2 Where did he go on the Sabbath? 2, 3
3 Did these waters possess healing properties? 3, 4
4 What interested Jesus in this man? 5, 6
5 Why did he ask him if he wanted to be healed? 6
6 How had the people always treated him? 7
7 How could he walk at Jesus' command? 8, 9
8 What good advice did Jesus give him? 14

JESUS AND THE SABBATH.

Mark 2: 23; 3: 6.

1 Why did the Pharisees call this breaking the Sabbath? 2: 23, 24
2 What was God's original purpose for the Sabbath? Gen. 2: 2, 3
3 How did Jesus justify his disciples? 2: 25, 26
4 What rule did he lay down for Sabbath observance? 2: 27, 28
5 What opposition did he meet in the synagogue? 3: 1, 2
6 How did the Pharisees show their true character? 3: 4-6
7 How did Jesus appeal to them? 3: 3-5
8 How far did they carry their opposition? 3: 6

THE TWELVE APOSTLES.

Luke 6: 11-16.

1 Why did Jesus choose the Twelve at this time? 11, 12
2 Why did he spend the night before in prayer? 12, 13
3 Were they already his disciples? 13
4 Why did he call them apostles? 13
5 Who were the men chosen? 14-16
   (a) Who were the leaders? 14
   (b) What did he make of Simon? 14
   (c) How was John changed? Mark 3: 17, John 21: 20
   (d) What about the unknown apostles?
   (e) Why did he choose Judas?

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

Mark 3: 22-30.

1 How did the Scribes slander Jesus? 22
2 What was his answer? 23-27
3 Against what did he warn them? 28, 29
4 What was the unpardonable sin in their case? 30

Resume on the Greatest Evangelizing Agency.

One by One.

Judging from appearances, it would seem as if all branches of the Christian church had decided that the way to win the world to Christ is through the impersonal method of the public preaching service. But the actual experience of many Christians recalls the fact that, in the beginning, Andrew found Simon and Philip found Nathanael, and said, "We have found the Messiah."

One of the most successful workers on the one-by-one plan was the late Henry Clay Trumbull. In his little book, "Individual Work for Individuals," Mr. Trumbull gives many cases from his own experience in winning souls to Christ. He says that he once heard Henry Ward Beecher remark, "The longer I live, the more confidence I have in those sermons preached where one man is the minister and one man is the congregation." Mr. Trumbull was himself brought to Christ by a letter from a friend, and that, he says, "taught me a lesson as to the way of working for souls." He resolved to "press Christ on the individual soul, so that none who were in the proper sphere of my individual responsibility or influence should lack the opportunity of meeting the question of whether they would trust and follow Christ." And this resolve he carried out during his whole life.

One day, on entering a train, Mr. Trumbull took a seat by a young man whom he had noticed at a religious meeting the evening before, and began conversation by hoping that he would enter into Christ's service with the others. Later the young man wrote to Mr. Trumbull from the country, where he was then living, saying, "O, Mr. Trumbull! You cannot urge the followers of Jesus in too strong terms to talk more of him. A kind word may save a soul! Do they realize it?"

One wintry Sunday, in western Massachusetts, Mr. Trumbull's host sent him in his carriage to an appointment several miles away. On the way he entered into conversation with the Irish driver, who proved to be a Catholic. Mr. Trumbull established friendly relations by referring to some Roman Catholic bishops and priests whom he knew and esteemed, and went on to ask the man if he were a good Catholic. A few hours later, when Mr. Trumbull rose in the pulpit, he saw the driver sitting before him. When they drove back the conversation was again on the theme of themes, with fresh comments suggested by the morning's sermon. That evening, Mr. Trumbull says, he "realized that the Protestant and Roman Catholic had had a talk as much to their mutual spiritual profit as if they had been two Presbyterian elders in conference in revival time."

There was a season of special religious interest in the city in which Mr. Trumbull was living. There sat at the same table in the boarding house a gentleman and his wife who were not Christians and apparently not interested in the revival movement. Mr. Trumbull resolved to go to the gentleman's place of business, just after business hours, while Mrs. Trumbull called on the wife in her room, urging them to become Christians. They had the same experience, finding the man and his wife both secretly longing for some one to speak to them on the subject of religion. They soon confessed their faith and joined the church, being active Christians the rest of their lives, and their children after them.

One winter, sometime after the Civil War, Mr. Trumbull passed some weeks in the South. He learned that a young gentleman at the boarding house had proposed to leave the house when he knew that a New England army chaplain was coming there and was only prevented by the crowded state of the town. Mr. Trumbull said nothing of religion, but endeavored to find the things the two enjoyed in common. When the day of his departure came, he decided to risk giving offense and go to the room of his fellow-boarder and say a word for Christ. The gentleman and his wife greeted him cordially, expressing regret at his intended departure, as they had enjoyed the intercourse of the past few weeks. Mr. Trumbull replied, that because of his growing personal interest in them, he had come to say that his joy in Christ's service was the greatest possession of his life, and that he longed for them to share that joy. The gentleman replied that he had been wishing that he knew more about Mr. Trumbull's religious belief. Learning that Mr. Trumbull was going to another Southern resort to remain some time, he and his wife decided to accompany him. The "boarder who had wished to leave the house because a clergyman was coming there, finally left the house with that clergyman in order that he might be personally instructed in that religion which he had come to desire as his own possession."

On reaching the hotel where they were to remain, conversation was renewed. In the course of it, Mr. Trumbull said, "I do not make any conditions of conduct for you to be saved, but if you were to find that Jesus wished you to refrain from some things, would you give them up, or would you feel that there are some that you could not refrain from?" After thought, the gentleman replied, "There are some things that I might have different views about from yourself. But if I were convinced that Jesus wanted me to refrain from any of those things, I should be willing to conform my conduct to his desire."

"That is sufficient. I lay down no requirements. Let your Saviour be your guide."

As a final result the gentleman and his wife became earnest followers of Christ and influential workers in the church.

During the Civil War, when Mr. Trumbull joined his regiment as chaplain, he found a young lieutenant who had been a Christian in his early Connecticut home, but he now declared that he had "given all that up" and would hear no word on the subject. As the weeks passed, Chaplain Trumbull, without

provoking discussion, let him know that a loving interest and hope in him was still kept. At last the lieutenant was wounded in battle. Mr. Trumbull found him in the hospital with his right leg amputated. His greeting was, "The Lord has got me, Chaplain. I wouldn't serve him with two legs, so he took away one. But I'll be more of a man with one than with two. You were right, Chaplain; I never really gave up my belief." In later interviews he talked of his plans for Christ's service in the future. But the shock of the amputation proved too great for his strength, and he sank away. But the Chaplain's loving kindness had saved the prodigal.

Once, in North Carolina, the regiment after a dangerous raid barely escaped from the enemy on transports down a river. The skipper of the boat on which Mr. Trumbull was, "felt the responsibility, and gave evidence of this in his superabundant profanity." After they had reached comparative safety, the Chaplain complimented the skipper on the skill he had shown in escaping from a dangerous situation. The old sailor, in reply, told of other exciting experiences he had had, mentioning one perilous time on the coast of Africa. "Ah, captain! I suppose you were in charge of a slaver then," said the Chaplain. He replied, with a chuckle, "Yes, Chaplain, I've been up to purty nigh everything in my time, 'cept piety." "Wouldn't it be worth while to try your hand at that before you die?" "Well, I suppose it would be fair."

This was the beginning of a free and earnest talk. Afterward, whenever the old skipper was near that regiment he came to their chapel-tent to attend the religious services. After the war was over Mr. Trumbull heard of the old captain in his New England home. In old age "he was honestly trying his hand at piety before he died."

Once, after the war, Mr. Trumbull met a former fellow-officer. In conversation the man said that if a certain change in his personal affairs should occur he might be ready to openly commit himself to the Saviour. Months passed by, and the state of things, which he had suggested might influence his action, came about. The rest is given in Mr. Trumbull's own words:

"When I knew of this change in affairs, I had his promise in mind, and in the early morning I presented myself at his home. 'I told my wife that the Chaplain would be up here to see me, after this,' was the greeting he gave me as I entered his home. What if I had failed to remember my promise at a time like this! That brave officer was ready to do his duty. He openly took a stand for Christ. His influence over others was great. He became known throughout the land as a Christian."

As we read, a few things become clear to us. Mr. Trumbull must have "lived his religion" before these acquaintances, so that they could not accuse him of inconsistency, or impugn his sincerity. He possessed a sincere, loving earnestness which was evident to each one whom he addressed. He used a marvelous skill and tact in approaching each individual. He looked for opportunities of speaking a word for Christ, and followed them up with a courteous persistence.

He made it his chief business to win souls to Christ, and this one thing he did with intense conviction, loving persistence, and rare tact and skill.

Dr. David Gregg on Personal Work.

POINTS FOR CHRISTIAN WORKERS.

THE DIFFICULTY IS TO START.

With the vast majority of people this is the most difficult thing of all, viz: to start—to tell the story of their salvation for the first time—to give the first invitation—to make the first effort to invade the personality of another and bring it face to face with Jesus Christ.

To make a start they have to overcome timidity and prejudice and foreboding and fear of giving offense and apprehension lest the besought may be driven away from Christ, rather than attracted to him. How many questions a man asks himself when he begins evangelistic testimony-bearing work, when he actually seeks to save his first soul for Christ. "Am I the best party to speak to that soul? If I speak to him, am I sure that I shall say the right word? Does God want me to speak to him? How will he receive me?" It is hard to begin; but, Christian, do your duty and God will stand by you. The Spirit of God will see to results. The Spirit will supplement your deficiency and overrule your blunders and straighten out your imperfections of service.

Canon Wilberforce tells this story of Herkomer, the great English portrait painter. "Herkomer had an old father, who lived with him in his splendid palace at Bushy. In his early life his father used to model in clay. In his old age his great fear was that his work would show imperfection. It was his one sorrow as he retired to bed at night that he had lost his art. Knowing this, his talented son went into his father's studio after he was asleep, and took up the tools and made his father's feeble attempt as beautiful as art could make them. When the old man came down in the morning and looked at his work he used to rub his hands in perfect delight and exclaim, 'Ah, I can do it as well as ever I did! See the work speaks for itself.'" In some such way the Spirit of God will supplement your work and make up for your defects. Begin. Trust him, and see for yourself if he will not.

A gentleman in New York put into my hand a little booklet entitled "A Day's Time-Table," with the request that I read it. The booklet bears right on this point. The heroine of the book is a young woman

who lives in the home of wealth and fashion. She is a Christian. In her devotional reading of the Bible one day she came across this verse, Deuteronomy 11:21: "That your days may be as the days of heaven upon the earth." She said to herself: "I have no such days on earth." Then she began to wish that God would give her a time-table from heaven for each day and fill it with duty to be done each hour of the day. That would make earth days heaven days. She longed to do Christian work and be useful, but how she did not know. A voice within said to her: "Only begin and God will see to the coming time." She replied to the voice: "I will." That very day a poor girl came to see her father on business. Her father being absent from home it fell to her lot to talk with the girl. She accepted that as the opportunity from God. The girl was an invalid and needed help and sympathy; and she gave these to her. In doing her duty by this poor girl she started to work for Christ. The result was this: The work of that one hour grew and shaped itself and developed into an organization for invalids; then into a seaside home; and then into hundreds of lives brightened and restored to health; and then into a great host of hearts won to the Master.

SEE TO IT THAT CHRIST BE TRULY REPRESENTED.

The chief thing to be looked after in carrying on the work of Christ on earth is to see to it that Christ is truly represented among men by those who profess to live his life. If as Christians we do not in our own personality give the world the best representation of him, he will not be appreciated and he will not be accepted by others.

Two men stopped on the street to talk. Just then a street organ struck up a tune. It was a mean and rickety instrument, and did nothing but wheeze and groan and give forth distortions and sounds in spasms. "Let us move on and get rid of that abominable tune," said the one to the other. His friend replied: "The tune is all right. Do you not know it?" "No, and I do not care to know it. I could never be made to like it." "Why not? It was written by none other than the great Handel. It is 'See the Conquering Hero Comes.'" "Well, then, Handel wrote a very poor thing." "I cannot allow Handel's work to be slandered thus; you must come with me to the Handel festival and hear that tune as it ought to be rendered." A month later the admirer of Handel took his friend to the Handel festival. As the man listened to that sound of harping symphonies and sevenfold hallelujahs he was especially carried away with one part. He went into raptures in his praise of it. Asking his friend what that part was called, he was surprised at the reply: "That is 'See the Conquering Hero Comes.'" There are Christians and Christians, and there is as much difference between them as there is between a creaking hand organ that creaks out in paroxysms and gasps Handel's great production, and the finely selected and managed orchestra that makes Handel's great production thrill. We wish Christ presented to men at his best, that men may love him. Only the fine Christian personality can present him at his best, but he can.

BE FULLY SURRENDERED.

Let no one be discouraged at the high requisites for effective Christian service. They are possible to all through the indwelling and operation of the holy spirit of God, who today dwells in the church. Even the humblest saint can be a telling representative of Jesus. The Christ in his soul may be just as true as the Christ in the soul of the greatest saint. The smallest rainbow in the tiniest drop of water, which hangs on the sooty eaves of your house, and which catches the sunlight; the smallest rainbow in that tiny water-drop has precisely the same lines and the same colors, and the same order of beauty as the great arch that strides in grandeur across half the sky.

My fellowmen, having the right personality for effective Christian work is narrowed down to just this: It is a simple question of the complete surrender of self to God, to be filled with his life and to be guided by his spirit. Are you surrendered to God? That is the question. If so, he can use you and he will use you, and through his use of you souls will be saved. A church of fully surrendered men and women will be a spiritual church and a soul-saving church.

LOOK AFTER YOUR PERSONAL INFLUENCE

We can receive much from one another, because we have a great influence the one over the other. We search one another; we rebuke one another; we chill one another; we stimulate one another; we educate one another; we interpret one another, and we do this unconsciously and by our simple presence. We see this illustrated in a hundred ways in daily life. A handsome woman, for example, interprets and measures the plainness of all women who are not handsome when they come into her presence. A tall man, for example, interprets and measures the shortness of short men who come into his presence. Short men know this. There are short men who know this so well that they positively refuse to go into a room where there is a single tall man. I do not blame them. They desire to have all the credit there is in their little height without any invidious comparison. We judge one another. We reveal one another by our simple presence; therefore the presence of a hopeful, constant, efficient Christian worker is one of the greatest powers for Christ and for the cause of Christian work. He is an inspiration among workers. He creates an atmosphere of enterprise in which great plans for God are formed. He instructs. He suggests methods of work. Brethren, keep constantly in the fellowship of such.

REQUISITE FOR PERSONAL EVANGELISM.

It is this: An effective Christian personality. This is our chief furniture in Christian work. It is away beyond any I have as yet named. You may be able to quote the Bible most fluently in answer to the objections of the skeptic, but if you have not a real Christian personality to put back of your apt Bible quotation you will spoil the Bible and ren-

der its pungent sayings powerless. It is the man or the woman back of the book that gives it its force. It is the man back of the sermon that makes the sermon a power.

Spurgeon tells us that he went once to hear George Muller preach—that man who did so much for the orphans and who carried on his great enterprises on the capital of his simple faith in God. He says of George Muller's sermon: "Oh, it was such a soul-feast to me!" "Why, Mr. Spurgeon, was the sermon grand?" "No, it was not; there was no grandeur about it. It was as plain a sermon as I ever heard. It was the man in the sermon that moved me and thrilled me. It was George Muller's spiritual strength poured into my emptiness that fed me. If many another man had preached it, it would have been profitless to me. But it was profitable to me, because it came out of George Muller's life, and because George Muller was back of it." The man! That is everything.

In calling us to labor for him God first of all bids us look after what we are ourselves by way of faith and love and holiness of life. He knows that men can believe in a God up in heaven when they see a God dwelling in our hearts here on earth. The greatest evidence of a spiritual religion is a holy life. The best service you can render to the Master is to be like him. Character is service. It is an argument which no man can gainsay.

Personal Work.

There is no question that the world will never be saved by preaching—and only in rare cases can the unsaved be induced to read God's word.

The fact is then plain, that unless Christians are awakened to the need and to the value of personal work, that the kingdom of Heaven will make no marked progress in the coming years.

The feeling is quite general that men cannot be saved wholesale by revivals as in Moody's day. The Torrey-Alexander work in England would seem to deny this, but a large part of their success is due to personal work.

The Young Men's Christian Association trained a large number of personal workers ten years ago and still has a number each year in their training classes.

The spiritual fervor of a revival will often energize some to speak to others of their soul, who have never done so before and seldom do so again. This is far better than to never have it done, but too often the one sought is apt to say and think that you are excited.

The ordinary young man or young woman unsaved, thinks more of his condition than we give him credit for, and the rebuff so often given to these matters is an indication of it.

Then again our own lives make us dumb on this subject before those whom we know best, and who knows us. This leads personal workers to do most of their work with strangers.

This is all right, providing we have a real interest in a stranger, but to thrust our hands among the heart strings of a stranger and then pass on because he resents it is brutal.

Then again. this work can only be done by those who have a definite faith. A promoter cannot sell stock in something he does not believe in.

If you have had a definite experience in religion, so much the better, but do not insist that the man you work with have the same kind of experience.

The area of the entrance to the way of life is the same for each, but to one it's round, another hexagon, another square, etc. After the proposition has been lovingly presented and accepted, don't turn the lamb loose among wolves, but shepherd it a little while. Introduce it to the word of God.

What are the qualifications for a soul-winner: Faith in Christ, a love of Christ, belief in Heaven, and some other place not nearly so salubrious as a place of residence, and an interest and a love in the welfare here and hereafter of the one you seek.

The hope of Heaven is a poor bait to hold out. Appeal to accept Christ because it is the right thing to do, the manly thing to do, and provides the only power that will enable a man to live the life that will produce the most good in the world, for not only himself, but others.

Don't talk church, a man might go to some churches a year and not hear a thing that would lead him to accept Christ.

Use the word of God as arbiter in every question that comes up. Don't argue. It is not an affair of the head but of the heart. Back of doubt, in nine cases out of ten, you will find sin in one form or another. Christ's conversation with the woman at the well is the example for all ages.

Ten persons doing quiet, unheralded perpetual personal work in a church would produce more saved men than a continuous revival.

It is a work of peculiar value. Placing the value of a soul at $1,000 say, Christ said it was worth a world, one would go about it thoughtfully to secure a $1,000 contract. He would be interested in that contract until it was fulfilled.

Don't try to get soul-rich too quick. The record does not tell us that Christ won a great many.

Pick out a half dozen young people in your church, and present the opportunities of this kind of work to each one personally. Don't organize. After they have commenced work they might meet for counsel or Bible study. Levi Gilbert says what we need is more dynamics and less mechanics.

These workers should know their Bibles well enough to locate pivotal verses. Personal work can be diagrammed as a triangle—God at the top, with the Holy Spirit acting on the heart of worker and on the one you are winning, the base being your prayerful interest in the latter.

Personal Work on the "One-by-One" Plan.

FROM THE RAM'S HORN.

LED IN PRAYING FOR OTHERS.

Oswald Chambers, a teacher, has just related a remarkable instance showing how God leads us in praying for others. May this not be an explanation why some pastors are more successful than others, since they keep themselves in harmony with God and their people pray for them with open hearts? Mr. Chambers writes:

"Let me tell you a little of my own experience. My starting the 'One-by-One' method in earnest was many years ago—it grew on me as an alarming conviction that I was telling untruths when I told people I would pray for them, because sometimes I prayed and sometimes I did not. So I got two notebooks, one for the unconverted and one for the converted. I do not put down everyone, but those I feel intuitively impelled to put down. Then every morning of my life, between 5:30 and 7, their names are gone over before God. Some mornings some names impress me more, and I pray more earnestly. For instance, two years ago one name in my Christian note book arrested my heart, and I could not get liberty to pray for that man, and for seven mornings running, the same barrier was experienced. One morning I met the man. 'I say, I have been praying for you steadily every morning for a year and a half,' I said. He looked amazed and thanked me. 'But,' I continued, 'the last seven mornings I have had no liberty in praying for you.' To my concern the big man cried, saying, 'Oh, let me tell you and confess.' I felt impelled to prevent him and did. 'No, do not confess to me; is the sin against any person or God?' 'Against God,' he said. 'Then,' I said, 'you put it right between you and God, and I will get liberty to go on praying for you.' I have had liberty every morning for that soul since. He is a minister."

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS BLESSED.

W. G. Pope, a pastor in Manchester, England, is constantly recommending "One-by-One," and using that method in saving souls for Christ. He writes in The (London) Christian.

"At a recent mission in Birmingham I invited the teachers of the Sunday School to try it, and at the closing testimony-meeting a young man said: 'At the commencement of this mission I claimed the six lads of my class for Christ, and they have all been saved this week.' A young lady also said: 'I did likewise for the eight girls of my class, and they, too, have all declared for Christ.'"

What would it mean for the church and the world if every Christian followed the "One-by-One" plan?

PERSONAL WORK THAT COUNTS.

In connection with the Torrey-Alexander meetings in Bolton, England, many of the professing Christians were enabled to consecrate themselves to do personal work.

Among those helped in this way was Colonel Ainsworth, of Smithhill's Hall, with whom Mr. Torrey was staying.

One day as the Colonel was returning from the afternoon meeting, he missed his carriage and was obliged to go home on the street car. Sitting next to him was a workingman. Very promptly the Colonel asked him if he were a Christian. The question being answered in the affirmative, the Colonel said: "Ask the lady next to you if she is a Christian, and if she is, tell her to ask the lady next to her." This was done until everyone in the street car had been spoken to concerning their soul's welfare.

AVOID CONTROVERSY.

An interview like the following is sometimes necessary, but avoid stirring up opposition and always keep uppermost your interest in the man:

Some men make radical statements on the spur of the moment which frequently causes them some embarrassment. Said such a man this past week, "I don't take any stock in this religious stuff. Nobody believes the people in it. They're all hypocrites, and don't live up to what they profess."

In reply his friend said, "What would make you believe you are wrong?"

"Well," said he, "if a friend of mine were to die and be buried three or four years and then come back and tell me he had seen these things, I'd believe."

"Then you believe only what has been seen by yourself or some friend?"

"You bet, seeing is believing."

"Now, my friend, let me prove you are wrong," his friend replied. "I'll do it with just three questions. You say 'seeing is believing.' Did you ever see your own brains?"

After thinking a moment, the answer came slowly, "No."

"Did you ever know a man who has seen them?"

Again "No."

"Do you believe you have any?"

No answer, but his face!—such a queer expression.

"Well," his friend went on, "I believe you have by what I see and know you are doing. Just so, I believe this religious stuff of which you speak, by the result in the lives of men, for *all* men are not the kind of which you speak."

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

Our volume commences with October and ends with September. The September issue each year contains a four to six-page cross-reference index to the seven hundred or more illustrations, also a textual index of them, as well as the 100 gists of sermons. You can see that it is extremely important that your subscription begins with the October issue. For the benefit of those who were not aware of this we have reserved a number of the October, November and December issues and if in subscribing you mention it, we can date your subscription from October and send you those three numbers, which incidentally are the best we ever published.

Sermon Department.

The Price of Power.

BY MR. S. D. GORDON.

THE LAW OF EXCHANGE.

Every man needs power. Every earnest man coyets power. Every willing man has the Master's promise of power. But every man does not possess the promised power. And many, it is to be feared, never will. Many a man's life today is utterly lacking in power. Some of us will look back at the close of life with a sense of keen disappointment and of bitter defeat. And the reason is not far to seek nor hard to see through. If we do not have power it is because *we are not willing to pay the price.*

Everything costs. There is a law of exchange that rules in every sphere of life. It is this, "to get you must give." It rules in the business world. If I want a house or a hat I must give the sum agreed upon. It rules in the intellectual world. If a young man wants a disciplined mind he must give time, and close application, and some real hard work. It holds true in the spirit realm. If you and I wish to have business transactions in this upper world of spirit-life we must be governed by this same law. To have power in our lives over sin and selfishness, and passion, and appetite; over tongue, and temper, and self-seeking ambition; to have power in prayer, and in winning others over from sin to Jesus Christ, one must first lay down the required price.

What is the price of power? Turn to Jesus' talk with Peter and the others in the latter part of the sixteenth chapter of Matthew's Gospel. Jesus has been telling them of the awful cross-experiences which he clearly saw ahead. Peter, probably fearful that whatever came to his Master might possibly come to himself also, and shrinking back in horror from that, has the hardihood to rebuke Jesus. The Master, recognizing the suggestion as coming from a far subtler individual than Peter, who is using ignorant Peter's selfishness to repeat the suggestion of the wilderness, again bids *him* begone. Then in a few simple words of far-reaching significance, he states first the standard of power, and then the price to be paid by one who would reach that standard. Listen to him: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

IN THE FOOTPRINTS OF JESUS.

Let us look a little into these familiar words: "If any man *would come after me*"—that is the standard set before us. Not to be regarded as a pillar in the church, a leader in religious circles, a good Bible student, a generous giver, an earnest speaker, an energetic worker, a spiritually minded person, but, what *may* not be coupled with any or all of these admirable things, *to tread in the footprints of Jesus.*

Think back into that marvelous life. A human life, remember. For though he was Son of God he lived his life down here as a son of man. Think of his power over temptation, not alone at the outset in these fierce wilderness struggles, but through those succeeding years of intense conflict; his power over Satan, over man-possessing demons, over disease; his power in dealing with the subtle schoolmen trying their best to trip him up, as well as over his more violent enemies who would have dashed him over yon Nazareth precipice, or later stoned the life out of his body in Jerusalem. Recall the power of his rare unselfishness; his combined plainness and tenderness of speech in dealing with men; his unfailing love to all classes; his power as a soul winner, as a man of prayer, as a popular preacher, lovingly wooing men while unsparingly rebuking their sins. *There* is the suggestion of Jesus' standard of power. Would you go *after him?* You may. For as the Father sent him even so sends he us, to do the same work and live the same life.

But wait a moment before answering that question. There is another side in his life to that "Come-after-me." Opposites brought into contact produce a violent disturbance. Such a life as that of Jesus, down in the atmosphere of this world, will of necessity provoke bitter enmities, both then and now. Listen. He was criticized and slandered. They said he was peculiar and fanatical. His friends thought him "beside himself," swept off his feet by excessive, hot-headed enthusiasm. They "laughed him to scorn," and reviled him. They picked his words, and nagged his kindliest acts, and dogged his steps. Repeated attempts were made upon his life, both at Nazareth and by stoning at Jerusalem. A determined conspiracy against his life was planned by the Jerusalem officials six months before the end actually came. He was practically a fugitive for those months. At the last he was arrested and mocked and *spit* upon, struck with open hand and clenched fist, derisively crowned with thorns, and finally killed—a cruel, lingering, tortured death.

"If any man would *come after me.*" Plainly this language of Jesus put back into its original setting begins to assume a new significance.

A FIXED PURPOSE.

But look at these words a little more closely. "*If*"—it is an open question, this matter of following Jesus. It is kept open by many people who want to be known as Christian, but who hesitate over what a plain understanding of Jesus' words may involve. Some of us may be disposed to shrink back from the simple meaning these words will yet disclose.

"If any man *would*"—would is the past tense of will. The word will is one of the strongest in our language. A man's will is the imperial part of him. It is the autocrat upon the throne; the judge upon the bench of final appeal. Jesus is getting down to the root of matters here. He is appealing to the highest authority. No mere passing sentiment is this. Not attending a meeting and being swept along with the crowd by the hour's influence. But *a fixed purpose*, calmly, resolutely settled upon, rooted away down deep in the very vitals of

the will to follow Jesus absolutely, no matter what it may cost or where it may cut.

I wonder how many of us would form such a purpose, to follow Jesus *blindly*, utterly regardless of what it might be found to mean as the days come and go? "Oh, well," I hear some one say, "why talk like that? Nobody is required to suffer today as he did." Do you think not? I am not so sure about that. There is a young man in Southern India, bright fellow, full of power, of high class family, who heard of Jesus, and felt the personal appeal to himself of that marvelous story. He thought a good while of what it meant, and what it might involve, and at length resolutely formed his decision to accept and follow Jesus. As he had anticipated, his dear ones remonstrated with him, coaxed, pleaded, threatened, and finally, his own father violently put him out of his life-long home, and he has remained since *an outcast* from home and loved ones. These words of Jesus surely are full of significance to him.

"But that was in India, far off, heathen India," you say. Well, here is something of a similar sort at home. I knew a young woman in a certain New England town visiting away from home. She attended some meetings where she was visiting, and decided to be a Christian. She was betrothed to a young man, not a Christian, in her home town. At once she wrote him explaining her new step, thinking doubtless how glad he would be. For most men seem very willing to have their *wives* Christian. But he wrote back that if she were determined to be a Christian that must put an end to their engagement. He was not a Christian and did not want his wife to be one. Every one here must know how serious a question that brought up for decision. For she was a true woman, and love's tendrils twine with wondrous tenacity about a woman's heart. And I presume, too, that everyone of you has already thought while I am speaking, of the temptation that, quick as a flash, went through her mind. "You need not make a public matter of this. Just be a true Christian in heart and life, and in that way *you'll win him over afterwards.*" I imagine some of you have heard something like that before. But she remembered that her new Master said "Confess" as well as "believe." It was a crisis; a severe struggle of soul. But she felt she must follow her Master's leading regardless of what it involved. And so she decided. You are not surprised to know that she was ill for a time. The intense strain of spirit affected her body. "If —any—man—would—come—after—me" meant much to her. Did it not?

Without doubt if some of *us* listening today were to follow Jesus quietly, but absolutely, in all things as his own spirit plainly led, we would find as sharp a line of separation drawn against us, as did he in Palestine, and these young people of India and America.

Many a social door would be shut in our faces. O, shut *politely* of course! Society thinks it in very bad form to get unduly excited about mere matters of religious opinion. But the door is *shut*, and barred, too. Some of us would possibly be searching for other business positions before tomorrow's light faded away if we were determined to go only where *he* clearly pointed the way.

But we have only begun to get at the meaning of Jesus' words. Is there still *a fixed purpose* to follow regardless of what meaning these words may yet disclose? Not impossibly the company of those willing to go straight through this verse with a calm, determined "yes" to every word of Jesus, will grow smaller as we go on.

A CHARACTER SKETCH.

Let us go a little farther. "If any man would come after me let him *deny himself.*" "Deny himself"—what does that mean? Well, "deny" means to say "no," plainly and positively. "Himself" is the smoother English word for his-self. Let him say no to his-self. Please notice that Jesus is not speaking of what is commonly called self-denial. That is, repressing some desire for a time, sacrificing something temporarily in order to gain an advantage later. That sort of thing is not peculiar to the Christian life, but is practiced by all classes, even among the lowest. He is not speaking of that, but something far more radical. Reading the verse through again it will be seen that there are three distinct persons referred to by Jesus. First, the "any man" he speaks of, and then the two others represented by these words "himself" and "me," either one or the other of whom is influencing this "any man's" life. "Say no to his-self" is coupled with "follow me." And the opposite is implied—"if any man will not do as *I* desire," he will continue to do as he is now doing, namely, "deny me and follow his-self."

These two persons "self" and "Jesus" are placed here in sharpest contrast. An uncompromising antagonism exists between them. They are sworn foes, and every man must decide to which he will yield his allegiance. To agree with either one is to oppose the other one. For a man to settle some matter that comes up for decision by saying "yes" to the desires or demands of his-self involves his saying "no" to Jesus. And on the other hand his yielding assent to the plans and wishes of this "me," *i. e.*, Jesus, is plainly equivalent to saying "no" to his-self.

What is this "self" in each of us that Jesus sets in such antagonism to himself, and instructs us to say a hard, uncompromising, unceasing "no" to? There are a few words in common use that give some suggestion of its character. There is the word "selfish," that is, being absorbed in one's own self; in getting every stream to flow by his own door. That is commonly regarded, even in absolutely worldly circles, as a detestable trait. Its opposite, "self-forgetful," being full forgetting one's self in thinking of others, is as commonly regarded in all circles as a charming, winsome trait of character. The words "self-centered," and "self-willed," are as familiar and suggestive.

The fact is, there is an individual living inside each one of us whom Jesus refers to, by this word "his-self." This individual takes on the degree of intensity and other local coloring of the person it inhabits. It may be polished, scholarly, cultured, or, coarse, ignorant and ill-

mannered. But—"scratch a Russian and you find a Tartar." Scratch through the veneering here and, whether coarse or highly polished, you will find the same individual—"self."

There are some quite marked characteristics by which its presence may be recognized. They may not all be noticeable together in any one person. But one or more will be found in every person whom it succeeds in influencing and dominating. One characteristic is this: *it covets praise.* It feeds and fattens on commendation. It constantly seeks to be highly esteemed, to have its worth properly appraised. It is immensely impressed with its own importance, its value to society, its keenness, wisdom or aptness, and wishes others to be so impressed also. It is fond of a mirror, especially one made to magnify. It seeks recognition. It presses forward, rudely or politely, according as its habitat has been trained in rude or polite circles. It may put on the garb of humility, and use the language of depreciation. But its ear is none the less keenly alert to hear the agreeable things and to cherish them.

Another characteristic, which really is simply the other side of this first named one, is this: *it shrinks from criticism.* How it writhes and twists at the least touch of unfavorable criticism! It is always on the defensive. The cheek colors at the suggestion of its being wrong, or having blundered, or of being peculiar.

How quickly it explains and defends and brings evidence of its being in the right. It is extremely sensitive. "It is that *touchy* thing in you." It is chronically troubled with "the disease of *touchiness.*" It has an interrogation point constantly on sentinel duty, namely, "What will *they* think?" "What will they say?" It lives in constant fear, under the lash of that huge, vague, awful "they." Its feelings are readily hurt. It is easily slighted. It remembers grievances.

I remember knowing a Sunday-school teacher who had a mission class of rather rough boys from non-Christian homes. I asked one day how she was getting along with them. "Going to give them up," she replied. "Is that so?" "They have all become Christians?" No, none of them were Christians, and they liked her, and said they would not come if she gave them up, but she felt discouraged, and anyway she had decided to give them up. Lawyers and women do not always give their reasons. I ventured to suggest that before giving them up, she have the boys come up to her home, one at a time, perhaps for tea; have a pleasant chatty time at tea and afterwards, and then before the boy left have a quiet friendly talk with him by himself about being a Christian, and a few words of prayer with him. Wouldn't she try that before giving them up? And I remember distinctly that her face blushed as red as a bright red rose, as she replied, "Why, Mr. Gordon, he'd *laugh at me!*" And she could not bear the possible chance of being laughed at for the other more likely possibility of winning a soul—a man—a life. That was "self" in her, shrinking back from a laugh; dreading that look of possibly contemptuous surprise that *might* come.

Another person, speaking about certain recreations very common in society, and which he was in the habit of joining, though freely questioning the propriety of so doing, said, "O, I don't care much for those things. I could easily give them up, but people think you are so queer if you decline, and you feel as if you were a back number." Ah! there was the rub. The desire to be thought well of; the dislike of being considered peculiar; the fear of that thinly veiled sneering curl on the lip—that was "self" in him asserting its presence, and even more, ruling his action. Do you recognize the individual inside of you that Jesus is speaking of?

There is a third tell-tale ear-mark of self that is difficult to conceal—*it is assertive.* It dearly loves to have its own way. It has plans and ambitions, and proposes to carry them through regardless of man, or—let the plain truth be spoken softly—of God. Its opinions are held tenaciously. Its favorite pronoun is "I," capitalized, with variations of "my" and "me." The personal equation is extremely powerful and persuasive.

The true follower of Jesus holds every plan "subject to change" from above. But this self, if allowed to rule, takes the bit in its tightly-shut teeth, and drives determinedly ahead, reckless of either man's or God's preferences, even though religious phraseology may be upon its tongue.

Still another trait of character of this self whose closer acquaintance we are making is this: *It has an insatiable appetite.* It grows hungrier by that on which it feeds. Its capacity is beyond the measuring line. If given free rein it will debase the holiest functions of the body, and degrade the highest powers of the mind to appease its gnawing, passion-bitten hunger. The noblest gifts, the purest emotions, the most sacred relationships are dragged down to the slimy gutter to tempt and temporarily stay its jaded palate.

UNMASKED.

That is something of a suggestion of the character of this other master than Jesus, who seeks to get control of us, and from whose relentless, vise-like grip Jesus would fain free us. He says there is only one thing to do with it. No half-way compromise—the great American expedient—will do here. The Master says plainly it is to be denied, repressed, put determinedly down, starved, strangled. To every suggestion or demand there is to be a prompt, positive, jaw-locked "no."

There is war to the knife, and the knife clear up to the hilt, between these two claimants for the control of our powers—self and Jesus. Paul understood this antagonism thoroughly. It comes out repeatedly in his writings. His name for this inner enemy, by an accidental turn in English, is Jesus' word "self" spelled backwards with the letter "h" added—f-l-e-s-h. His remarks in Romans, eighth chapter, verses four to eight, and twelve to thirteen, are simply an enlargement of these words in the sixteenth of Matthew's Gospel. If one will read these verses, substituting Jesus' word "self" for Paul's word, he will be surprised to find how strikingly Paul is expressing this very thought of Jesus. A free translation of part of these verses would read like this: Verse five —"They that choose to walk after self (as a

slave walked after, or behind, his master) will show their choice by obeying the desires of self, and they that choose to walk after the Spirit will obey the desires of the Spirit." Verse seven—"For the purposes of self are opposed to God's purposes; for it does not hold itself subject to God's wishes; indeed, in its very nature it cannot; and they that choose to obey self cannot please God." Verse thirteen—"If by the Holy Spirit's aid ye kill off the plans and doings of self, ye shall therein find real true life, and only so."

Plainly, the deep searching experiences of Paul's great soul, and his wide observation of others, in his ceaseless travels, confirm the statements already made, that there is the intensest hatred, the bitterest antagonism, between these two personalities represented by Jesus' words "himself" and "me." There can be no patched-up truce here. The only way the lion and the lamb can lie down together in this case is for the one to lie down underneath the other—conquered; or inside the other—devoured.

In his other letters Paul sometimes uses still another name, "the old man," and names the characteristics of this omnipresent self, which crop out with varying degrees of prominence, in different persons, and under different circumstances. Notice only a few of these: In Galatians, fifth chapter, nineteenth verse: "The deeds of self are....improper sexual intercourse, impurity, shameless looseness...." It will, wherever possible, debase the holiest functions of the body. In Colossians, third chapter, fifth verse, speaking of the "old man": "And covetousness, which is reckoning of highest worth that which is less worthy than God." That is to say, the ambitious longings of self will, if unchecked, become the ruling passion, thrusting all else ruthlessly aside and degrading the highest powers of the mind to satisfying its feverish desire. In Ephesians, fourth chapter, thirty-first verse: "Bitterness, passion, anger, loud disputing, evil-speaking... malice." Its assertiveness, and demand for a due recognition of its worth, its rights, its opinions, its proper place, bring bitterest burnings, and worse. It will not be needful to review recent events, or common congressional, and political, and society life for illustrations. They may be found much nearer one's own door.

Was there ever such a list? Such a being whose heart begets and nurses such progeny! This being has the smell of hell, and of the evil one himself. Ah! now we are getting at the straight truth. Self is Satan's personal representative in every human heart. It gets in through the only door by which it ever can gain an entrance, namely the door of disobedience. How keen Jesus was in recognizing the suggester of the thought that found expression through Peter's lips—"Get thee behind me, *Satan.*" Self is Satan, condensed into each man's life, though in some he dare not exhibit his coarser traits; and in others he is being *constantly conquered* by that power of the spirit of Jesus which comes through absolute, glad surrender to him.

This sly Satan-self may often be recognized by a favorite question it asks among Christian people about a great many so-called unimportant matters:—"What's the harm?" But a true follower of Jesus never lies down upon the plane of "what's-the-harm?" He lives up in a higher sphere with his Master, who "pleased not himself," but made it the steady, unfaltering aim of his life to do always those things that are pleasing to his Father. Men thought him narrow and fanatical, but he cared not so long as he could daily hear that clear, sweet voice saying "this is my beloved Son, in whom *I* am well pleased." The final touchstone which the follower of Jesus applies to ever matter is this: *Would it please him?*

Let everyone here who earnestly desires to fit into, and to fill out, Jesus' plan for his life, take paper and pencil and make a list of his personal habits; such as his eating, what he eats and how; his drinking, other things he puts into his mouth, his dress, the use and care of his body, his recreations, his reading, his conversation, his use of money, his use of time, his life plans and his daily plans, his social engagements; and regarding each ask plainly the question—what is the *motive* that *controls* me in this? Is it my own preference or enjoyment? Or, is it to please and honor Jesus? Let him further go through the list of his business methods, his friendships, the various organizations he belongs to, with the same question. If he will do thorough work he will probably have some stiff fighting on hand both at the start and afterwards. Many a life would thereby be radically changed. For example, I know a Christian storekeeper who has on his shelves a certain article bearing the label of a tonic medicine. But he knows perfectly well, as does anyone who stops to think about it, that the stuff back of the label is one form of an intoxicant. There can be no question of what the Master would say about it. But it brings a good profit. And his money-fevered self asserts its mastery and carries the day. And the man tightly grips the profits, while Satan chuckles with unholy glee, and souls are being damned by this Christian man's aid. Certainly there can be none of the power of God in such a life. Let us rather speak the truth and say that this man is exerting a positive power for Satan and hell.

All this is included in these few simple words, "let him deny himself." Is there still a fixed purpose to follow Jesus without regard to what it may cost us, or where the keen edge of separation may cut in?

THE BATTLE OF THE FORKS.

Here is a forking of the road. I bring this whole company up to this dividing, and therefore deciding, point. Let each choose his own road deliberately, prayerfully, with open eyes. This road to the left has as its law, yielding to self; saying: "Yes," to the desires and demands of self; with some modifications possibly, here and there, for I am talking to professing Christian people: "Yes" to Jesus *sometimes,* but at *other* times, when it suits circumstances and inclinations better to do otherwise —well, a pushing of the troublesome question aside. And that means a decided "yes" to self, with as positive a negative to Jesus' desires implied thereby. That is the left-hand fork.

This right-handed road knows only one law

to which exception is never made, namely: *Yes to Jesus,* everywhere, always, regardless of consequences, though it may entail loss of friendships, or money, or position, or social standing, or personal preference, or radical change of plans, or what not.

Judas assented to the cravings of his ambitious self and said "no" to his Master, thinking possibly, with his worldly shrewdness, thereby to force Jesus to assert his power. He little knew what a time of crisis it was, and what terrific results would follow.

Peter stood on the side of his cowardly, shrinking self in the court-yard that dark night, and against his Master. And though with matchless love he was forgiven, he never forgave himself, nor was able to get that night's doings out of his memory. Judas and Peter were brothers in action that night, and there are evidences that many other disciples are standing over in the same group. Are you? Which road do you choose tonight: this—to the left? Or, this—to the right?

I knew a young man who was deeply attached to an admirable young woman, both refined Christian persons, much above the average in native ability, and in culture. He made known to her his feelings. But as strong women are apt to do she held him off, testing him repeatedly, to find out just how real his attachment was. Finally revealing indirectly her own feeling she still withheld the consent he pleaded for, until he would yield acquiescence in a certain plan of hers for him. The plan, proper enough in itself, was an ambitious one, and tended decidedly toward swinging him away from the high, tenderly spiritual ideals that had swayed his life in college and afterwards, though he probably was not clearly conscious of this tendency. The only safe thing to do under such strong circumstances was to take time, aside, alone, for calm, poised thought and prayer, to learn if her plan was also the Master's plan for him. But the personal element proved too strong for such deliberation. The possibility of losing her swung him off his feet. It was no longer a question between her plan and the Master's plan. The latter dropped out of view, probably half unconsciously because hurriedly. *He must have her,* he thought. That rose before his eyes above all else. And so the decision was made. With what result? He is today prominent in Christian service, an earnest speaker, a tireless worker, with a most winsome personality. But his inner spiritual life has perceptibly dwarfed. His ideals, still high and noble, are distinctly lower than in his earlier life. Intellectual ideals, admirable in themselves, but belonging in second place in a Christian life, now command the field. His conceptions and understanding of spiritual truth have undergone a decided change.

The proposal of the self-life came in very fascinating guise to him. He hastily said "yes" to it: that meant as decided a refusal of Another's plan for him, which had once been clearly recognized, and accepted, but was now set aside, be it sadly said, as he swung quickly off to the left fork of the road.

There is an incident told of a European pastor, an earnest, eloquent man. The realization came in upon him that he had not been fully following the Master. In much of his life self was still ruling. He came to this forking of the road, and the battle was a fierce one, for self dies hard. But finally, "by the Spirit," he got the victory, as everyone may, and calmly stepped off to the right. He has vividly described that battle of the forks in language, the accuracy of which will be recognized by others who have been in action on that field.

"Oh, the bitter shame and sorrow,
That a time could ever be
When I let the Saviour's pity
Plead in vain, and proudly answered:
'All of self, and none of Thee.'

Yet he found me: I beheld him
Bleeding on the accursed tree;
Heard him pray, 'forgive them, Father,'
And my wistful heart said faintly:
'Some of self and some of Thee.'

Day by day, his tender mercy,
Healing, helping, full and free,
Sweet and strong, and oh, so patient,
Brought me lower, while I whispered:
'Less of self and more of Thee.'

Higher than the highest heaven,
Deeper than the deepest sea,
Lord, *Thy love* at last has conquered;
Grant me now my soul's desire,
'None of self and all of Thee.'"

Is there still a fixed purpose? Will you take this right fork? Let those who linger reluctantly and those who will, listen to the further word that Jesus adds: "Let him deny himself and take up his cross." *"Take up his cross"* —what does that mean? The cross has come to be regarded in these days as a fine ornament. It looks beautiful be-jeweled; on the end of a sword; or worked into regalia. It makes such an artistic finish to a church building, finely chiseled in stone, or enwreathed with ivy. It looks pretty in jewelry and flowers. But to Jesus and the men of his time it had a grim, hard, painful significance. In Roman usage a man condemned to death was required to take up the crude wooden cross provided, carry it out to the place of execution, and there be transfixed upon it. Plainly to these men listening, Jesus' words meant: Let him say "no" to his self, and then nail it up on the cross and leave it there *to die.*

Paul understood this thoroughly. To help the young Christians in Galatia he explains his own experience by saying: *"I have been crucified* with Christ"; and to the unknown friends in Rome he writes: "if ye by the spirit *put to death* the doings of the self life ye shall live." The only thing to do with this self is to kill it.

In Luke's account an intensely practical word is added to Jesus' remark: "Let him take up his cross *daily.*" A cat is said to have nine lives, because it is so hard to kill. I do not know what your experience may have been, but, judged by this rule, the self in me is tougher-lived than that. It has about ninety-nine, or nine hundred and ninety-nine lives. I put it on the cross today in the purpose of my will by the power of the Spirit, and I find it trying

to sneak down and step into active control again tomorrow through some sly, subtle suggestion which it hopes may get past the vigilance of my sentinel. That word *daily* becomes, of necessity, my constant keynote—a *daily* conflict, a *daily* sleepless vigilance, and, thank God, a *daily victory*.

Every man's heart is a battlefield. If self has possession, Jesus is lovingly striving to get possession. If possession has been yielded to Jesus, there is a constant besieging by the forces of self. And self is a skilled strategist. In every heart there is a cross, and a throne, and each is occupied. If Jesus is on the throne, ruling, self is on the cross, dying. But if self is being obeyed, and so is ruling, then it is on the throne. And self on the throne means that *Jesus has been put on the cross.* And it seems to be only too pathetically true that not only in New Testament times, but in these times, there are numbers of professing Christians, who in the practice of daily life, are crucifying the Son of God afresh, and openly exposing him to shame before the eyes of the crowd.

Suppose that tonight I determine to make this absolute surrender to Jesus as my Master. Tomorrow in some matter, possibly a small matter—speaking a word to some one—asking a silent blessing at the meal—making a change in some personal habit—or some other apparently trivial matter,—the Spirit quietly makes clear *his wish* as to what I should do. But I hesitate: it seems hard. I do not say that I will not obey, but actually *I do not.* Let me plainly understand that in such a single failure to obey, self is again mounting the throne, and Jesus is being dethroned and put over yonder on the cross.

Do some of us still hesitate at this forking of the roads, irresolute? A crowned Christ is attractive. But self's tendrils, though small, are tenaciously tough, and twine into so many corners and around some hidden things. And the uprooting and outcutting mean sharp pain. Is that so? And you hesitate? Please take another frank look.

LOCK-STEP.

These two forks differ radically. They differ in direction. One is to the *left;* the other to the *right.* And these two words are significant of more than direction. They differ in grade. This left-handed road does not seem to have any grade. It is smooth and level, and straight-away, *apparently.* But a keener look reveals a slant *down,* very slight at first, but steadily increasing, not only in its downward grade, but in the *proportionate* grade down.

This right-hand road has a decided grade *up* from the beginning, a steep slant, that causes many to avoid it, though they feel impelled to take it. Those who take it say that after the first decided step into it the slant does not seem nearly so hard as before starting, and that climbing it makes splendid muscles and gives an inspiring sense of exhilaration from the very start. The atmosphere is rare and purifying and invigorating. It is not traveled by so many, though the number keeps increasing. But such rare companionship, hitherto unknown, they afford!

The striking peculiarity of this road, however, is this, that each one keeps lock-step with a Certain One who leads the way. This One is remarkable in appearance. His face combines all the strength and resolution of the strongest man's with all the fineness and gentleness of the finest woman's. But he bears peculiar marks as though he had been through some terrible experience. His face has a number of small scars as though it had been torn by thorns and cut by thongs. His hands and feet look as though huge spikes had been forced through them. But the glory-light of another world is in his eyes, and illumines his face radiantly, and a glad ring is in his low, musical, singularly clear voice.

The walking in step with him is *so* close that one can feel the tender throbbing of his heart, and can talk confidentially with him in low, quiet tones, and can hear distinctly his gentle still-like voice in reply.

As one steps off quietly, determinedly to the right from the battle of the forks, he hears the closing words of Jesus' remarks to Peter—*"and follow Me."* Jesus sends no one ahead alone. He blazes out every path through the unknown, unbroken forest, and asks us simply to come along after him. He did what he asks us to do. The self-life was alluringly and repeatedly presented to him by Satan, in the wilderness, in the remark of Peter, by the visit of the Greeks, in Gethsemane, where the struggle of soul almost broke the tie that held body and spirit together, and many other times. In many a hard battle—for the divine Jesus was intensely human in his earthly life—he repeatedly said a never-varying "No" to the self-life, and lived a constant victory until the very last triumphant shout of victory on Calvary. It was a life of constant conflict, but of splendid, calming, scarce-broken peace within, and of marvelous power without.

Earnestly, lovingly, gently, yet passionately, he stands just ahead in that path now, with pierced hands outstretched in open invitation, with a heart-yearning in the depths of his great eyes, wooing us on to follow where he goes on before.

Let us follow. It may be, it *will* be, in some measure, through the experiences of the wilderness temptation, and of Gethsemane, and of Calvary, but it will also be to share the victory which was always coupled with every testing *he* met. It will as certainly be following him in power, and victory, on past Calvary to the new life of the resurrection morning, that saw the greatest display of power. And even past that, to the upper chamber where his words burn their way into our hearts—"as the Father sent me (clothed with power unconquerable) even so send I you." And then to Olivet where the victorious word rung out, "All power hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth, therefore go ye and make disciples."

"If any man
would come after me,
let him say 'no' to his self,
and nail it to the cross daily,
and follow me."

Jesus, Master, by the Holy Spirit's help, *I will.*

Present-Day Problems.

THE SUNDAY EVENING SERVICE.

Continued from December Current Anecdotes.

THE TESTIMONY OF A THOUSAND LETTERS.

By James L. Hill, in "Seven Sorts of Successful Services," published by E. B. Treat & Co., New York.

"Our greatest foe," one correspondent says, "is apathy." This non-aggressiveness seems to particularly characterize some country churches. It is a curious mark of the times that people, many of whom are aggressive in all other things, are non-aggressive in religion. The men of many a congregation come to church services worn out by hard work entailed by their vocation.

An army may seem to be experiencing reverses in spots, and yet may be overwhelmingly victorious when things are seen all along the line. In certain localities it would seem as if the Sunday night sermon was doomed. But a wider look discloses the beginnings of the inflowing tide. The west has much larger Sunday evening congregations than the east. The question is geographical. In *Parish Problems*, edited by Dr. Washington Gladden, it is shown that in conservative Massachusetts, of 523 Congregational churches, 450 have come into an arrangement which omits a second service. One correspondent, in *The Congregationalist*, in referring to the struggle necessary to maintain a second preaching service, says that "some bear the marks of it and will probably, like Jacob, go lame therefrom to the end of their pilgrimage."

A gentleman who has opportunities of wide observation among Congregational churches affirms that in Massachusetts Congregational churches average about one in each Conference that has an evening preaching service, which follows week after week, a regular and established order of service similar to the one that is used in the morning, only shorter. The evening service in Welsh churches is far more popular than the morning service. It is the recruiting ground of the church. Many of our correspondents in one denomination attribute all their success to their largely attended Sunday evening services. The weight of testimony in these multitudinous letters is that the low-water mark has been reached. We find that the consciousness of being on the down grade has stirred and awaked the church. Discussion of the matter, general agitation, special plans, and efforts to promote interest, systematic work, magnifying the evening sermon, making it practical, putting the best work of the day into it, emphasizing the service, music on a large scale, using a wider range of instrumentalism, spirited singing, enlisting young people to sit in the chorus-choir, inducing them to attend rehearsals which have a high but social spirit, prompt seating of attendants, courteous ushering, making more of invitation, keeping the service before the public eye, giving the people something to do, admitting the problem, and then facing it, adapting everything within reach to the end in view, when taken together or even in part have enabled the church to successfully meet what appeared little less than an exigency and have caused some of our correspondents to say: "It was a mistake for us to call that impossible which we at the time thought it impossible for us to perform." "Immense effort is the price I must pay for a good evening congregation." The ordinary commonplace service is probably not as well attended as it used to be, but we are not arguing for a powerless, unattractive, iron-bound second service. The church has been caused to assume more of the spirit and tone of conquest and to take a different and more aggressive attitude toward the local community.

Many of our correspondents say that they have full evening audiences on all special occasions and have sighed: "Oh, for special occasions!" Ingenuity devises many occasions and some write that there were more than they ever have recognized. If a church is closely allied to the community, many are suggested that an unsympathetic church would not detect, and while it is true that occasions like Easter, Christmas, reformatory endeavor, and a multitude of like things, require special preparation, yet anyone has found who has addressed from his pulpit the pupils who were beginning or ending the school year, that the occasion supplies the animation and the interest and so far forth makes just so much less of a demand upon him. In the Presbyterian denomination it is reported that the widespread evangelistic efforts that have been encouraged and put forth, and the consequent activity of ministers, and the helpfulness of church members have swept the Sunday evening service up into a new prominence. The Spirit giveth life. Let anyone attend Dr. Burrell's second service in New York, and he will learn the attractive power of a simple, forcible preaching of the gospel. A worshiper who cannot digest two sermons on the Sabbath where there is a preacher with a message needs a touch of the Great Physician. It is plain, however, that this service is not increasing unless pains are taken and expedients used to sustain it. A special effort among ministers seems to be required to overcome the widespread apathy that has for some time prevailed. If there is any significance whatever in that scripture "compel them to come in that my house may be filled," if we are enjoined to be aggressive, if the Saviour meant anything by his words, it is difficult to see why its full force does not apply to the meeting on Sunday night. If this is not the meaning of that scripture, what is its meaning? Some of the guests have a daylight timidity on account of poverty, but can come and do come when conditions are right on Sunday night. While not true in every case, yet, speaking broadly, the evening address rests on a different basis from that in the morning. The services are not essentially the same. Neither coaxing nor scolding nor reminders of duty can accomplish the desired result, and nothing seems to come from pressing the question of responsibility. Indeed, if a minister thinks his hearers are there from a sense of duty merely, it kills the sermon. "I was present," writes one of our correspondents, "when the minister upbraided the community for not attending the second service,

and then at such a meeting preached upon 'The Burial of the Dead in the Times of Joseph,' a sermon thought to have been carefully written some years before." Why can not people learn that it is not so much a mechanical arrangement of people at one end of the church and a minister at the other, as a universal necessity that men should have opportunity for worship? They seek it in heathen lands by idolatrous rites. Men need nothing so much as a vital relationship to their God, which is best represented in real worship. The pastor needs it as much as the flock. Whatever be the form of Sunday evening service, we must be surest, having gathered the people there, not to lose the central idea of worship.

(This subject will be continued in future issues.)

"Why Men Do Not Go To Church."

THE CRITICISM OF THE PEW ON THE PULPIT.

BY W. C. KING.

Paul declares that he did not "cor upt" the Word of God. This passage (2 Cor. 2: 17) is variously rendered. Dr. Bentley paraphrases it thus, "Which adulterate and negotiate the Word of God for their own lucre and advantage." The Apostle doubtless had in mind vintners who were wont to cheapen their wines by adulterating with foreign admixtures. Many men who have answered my questions believe that Gospel ministers today are introducing foreign admixtures and thereby cheapening the value of their message to the community.

One says: "Too many preachers are concerned with keeping pace with progress and literature and science, and are being carried away with reform movements, so-called."

A business man says: "The subjects chosen are oftentimes of a secular character with which the hearer is more conversant than the preacher. Men want to feel when they attend church that they are to worship the great and good God and worship does not consist of a 14-mile sermon only, and that foreign to all Biblical thoughts. Men want to know that God comes to their church to meet his people, and that his word is preached, that his praises are sung, that the prayers and petitions are earnest, honest and fervent and life-saving; in fact, that God is given the best in everything. Let the preachers quit preaching on the lives of Daniel Webster, Pocohontas, John Smith. Let them stop preaching on the church of Rome. Let them stop preaching on the liquor traffic, and confine themselves to the promises made at their consecration. Preach the word of the living God."

In a distant city, at a large gathering of men, these questions were introduced as the subject of a symposium, and the following is one of the conclusions formulated: "In answer to your fourth question, we have thought that ministers often lack definiteness. There seems to be no aim when preaching a sermon. Again, we rarely hear a sermon preached on man's obligation concerning the Sabbath, and only once in years have we heard a sermon preached on family worship."

A man in Halifax, N. S., writes: "Preaching which is taken up with critical philosophies and hair-splitting theories have little interest for the average workingman whose greatest problem is one of bread and butter. Too little interest is displayed in the physical and material welfare of men. A young man sitting beside me (a school teacher) says that the preaching he hears is too much taken up with the events of the past and that he is more interested in the present and the future and in ways and means of making these what they ought to be."

And a thoughtful man in San Francisco writes: "People do not stay away from church generally from any particular hostility to church work, but simply because they see nothing to go for. Sensational preachers, if men of ability, can always get good audiences because they give the people something that interests them; men go to church for the same reason that they go to the theater, and get about as much real good in the one place as in the other. There has grown up of late years a very general scepticism in regard to the vital truths of Christianity. Twenty-five years ago Gladstone said that the most marked feature in the spiritual life of men in this day was 'the decay of the sense of sin,' and more emphatically might he say it now. Men do not believe themselves sinners. They do not go to church because they feel no need of the church. Most of our preachers very rarely preach about God's holiness and sovereign claims on men, the lost estate of all men through sin, the atoning sacrifice of Christ and regeneration by the Holy Ghost—three vital doctrines. A late number of a religious paper of Boston gives over two columns of fine print to titles of forty sermons by eminent men in various churches. Many of these themes must have greatly interested their hearers, but not one of these sermons—judging by their titles—was intended to lead lost men to Christ. Now, why should sinful men go to church if they do not feel themselves to be sinners, and will there learn no way of getting rid of sin? Men are indifferent to the church because of general spiritual indifference."

Here are two contributions which were evidently written by men of affairs in the spirit of truth and soberness: "Ministers too often lose sight of the high calling of their priesthood and preach themselves, not Jesus Christ. They are too often afraid of wounding their hearers' feelings by strong condemnation of wrong, and their sermons are lacking the feeling that is only evident when sympathy with the divine exists." "Modern pomposity has taken the place of primitive simplicity and sincerity. An entertainer is one thing; a preacher is another and quite different thing. A true preacher will have a spiritual following."

From these and like words, we conclude that men feel the gospel to be cheapened today by

those who preach themselves, that is, keep their own personality at the fore, and by those who preach higher criticism either pro or con instead of the 'living word of God."

But there is another serious phase of the question which is put very plainly by several writers, namely, that the gospel is cheapened by men who undertake to preach it without natural or acquired ability for doing so. One clearly states it thus: "There are too many persons in the ministry who should be at something else—men who are in no sense adapted to the work they have chosen, hence they fail to properly instruct and are able to but feebly impress people in general. Many are unfitted by nature and unprepared by grace for their work." A railway superintendent in the State of New Jersey writes: "I think one of the strongest reasons why men do not go to church is that they have so little given them when they do go. In my opinion, the ministry is not keeping pace with the pew in intelligence and thought. This is a reading and thinking age, and the brightest minds are not giving themselves to the ministry; hence the average Christian minister is below the average in other callings and professions. The membership is much to blame for this state of affairs for, of course, the salary paid ministers does not keep pace with the amount that bright men in other callings can earn."

One reason for the impression recorded above is no doubt due to the fact that so many men do not, through indolence, make the preparation for the pulpit which they should. This fact is presented by the following correspondent, who is editor of a great daily paper in the States: "I believe the principal reason why educated men, lawyers, newspaper men, teachers, business men, etc., do not go to church is because of the poor quality of the average sermon. It is tiresome work to sit and hear a passage of Scripture butchered, displaying lack of preparation or lack of ability, especially if one has some time made a study of that particular passage himself in an intelligent fashion. There are just about four ministers in this city, out of thirty, who can—or who do—preach a logical, spiritual sermon. Most of them begin nowhere, harangue you for an hour with a lot of stock phrases, and end up nowhere. In my notion it is lack of preparation. There is a fair attendance of women—not, as I take it, because they are satisfied with mental and spiritual food of a poorer quality, but because their adherence to convictions of duty are greater.

"The reason why men do not go to church is laziness on the part of the preachers in not preparing something worth listening to for them when they do go."

The danger to the minister himself of such indifferent preparation is pointed out by a wise adviser in these words: "Your great danger is that your minds may die long before your bodies. Congregations will have young men, and they are right in this, but they must not reckon youth by years. We are dead when we cease to grow, and we cease to be ministers of Christ when we cease to be students of divinity."

But our text also asserts that some men negotiate the word of God, or, as some render the word, "huckster or traffic in it." However translated, the word has a bad flavor. Elsewhere Paul refers to the practice as "handling the word of God deceitfully," and again, Peter prophesies that "through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you." The warnings of the New Testament on this point are many and clear. "Some in that day were condemned because they were teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." Peter exhorted the elders to "feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind."

None who write to me presume to say that, to any large extent, ministers of the gospel are misers, lovers of money for itself. Many do call attention, however, to the fact that the commercial spirit of the age has seriously affected the usefulness of both the pulpit and the pew. One whose words have been quoted with profit under another head, has this to say: "There is a growing tendency on the part of those whom God has called to minister to our spiritual needs to select popular themes with a view of entertaining the masses rather than ministering to their needs spiritually, and a preacher's success is beginning to be measured even in our churches from a worldly standard, *i. e.*, the size of its congregation and its social activity rather than the number of souls born into the kingdom and the number who attend the weekly prayer meeting to be fed upon the living word." Some have been and are battling bravely against the commercial spirit and deserve only sympathy and support. Others have turned aside and entered business life. Still others have "adapted" their consciences to the times and are simply studying to please and amuse the public, and devoting their magnetic powers to selfish ends providing the luxuries they crave. They are not misers, but merely spendthrifts. With some it is no secret that under no circumstances would they consider a "call" that did not carry with it a very large money inducement. One example will suffice: A young man, fresh from the seminary, said in my home, "When I cannot have a salary of (naming a large sum) I will quit the ministry." And by the friendly aid of the faculty of the school which sent him out with such ideals he has now a pulpit that carries with it a salary much above the figure he then named. One result of this is the widening of the gulf between the ministry and the people. These men and their families come to live apart nearly or wholly from the "common people" such as followed our Lord gladly.

A correspondent in Richmond, Va., testifies that he "knows of cases in his city where the pastor and his family hold aloof from a large part of the membership of the church because of the 'social status' of the aforesaid members." Being a matter of the heart rather than of outward circumstances, this greedy anxiety for more money is not confined to men occupying large or wealthy churches. Some of the most covetous men I ever knew among ministers were in small churches, yet constantly restless for a call with more money back of it. The trouble is in the heart; it lies in the fact that men preach for money, not in the amount of

money their greed permits them to take, though when that is too large it becomes open scandal. And what a brood of evils does covetousness in the pulpit bring forth! Well might holy Richard Baxter write (and, by the way, is it not a very significant fact that all great saints have been poor men?),—"Think not of being rich—seek not great things for yourself or posterity. What if you do impoverish yourself to do greater good; will this be loss or gain? If you believe that God is the safest purse-bearer, and that to expend in his service is the greatest usury show them that you do believe it. I know that the flesh and blood will cavil before it will lose its prey, and will never want something to say against this duty, but mark what I say and the Lord set it home to your hearts—that the man that hath anything in the world so dear to him that he cannot spare it for Christ, if he call for it, is no true Christian. Oh, what abundance of good might ministers do if they would but live in contempt of the world and the riches and glory thereof, and expend all that they have in their Master's service, and pinch their flesh that they might have wherewith to do good! This would unlock more hearts to the reception of their doctrine than all their oratory, and without this singularity in religion will seem but hypocrisy; and it is likely that it is so."

The cure for the ills mentioned is such deepening of personal experience as will make the word real to the minister himself, giving him the consciousness of delivering his message as from God, and in his presence. "But really (so the words are paraphrased) from sincerity, and as from God, in the presence of God, we speak concerning Christ."

One man claims that there are "too many unconverted pastors."

The chief justice of the State of Pennsylvania touching question four: "The fervor of the spiritual life exisiting at former periods is not apparent now. That there is a vast amount of good work done is undoubtedly true, but the work is not carried on with that tremendous earnestness which the importance of the subject demands, and which would be manifest if they had a deep conviction of the truths of the Christian religion. Religious success is the result of conviction, and no great movements can result from an indifferent or lukewarm spiritual state."

What Dr. Robertson Nicoll says on this point is very important just here:—"Further this message is always a secret given by the Holy Ghost, and blessed by the Holy Ghost. No book, no earthly teacher can ever impart that hidden wisdom without which a minister must be a thing of nought. A minister must in his inmost soul live through the struggle and the victory. Nothing avails at all in this connection except an immediate and original experience of salvation."

Some one remonstrated with McHeyne for visiting the bedside of a dying man on a peculiarly busy Sunday afternoon, when he replied to this effect: "It is good for me to have a look into eternity before looking into the face of my congregation." After this one is not surprised to read these words, found in an unopened note that lay on his table, after his sudden death: "Pardon a stranger for addressing to you a few lines. I heard you preach last Sabbath evening, and it pleased God to bless that sermon to my soul. It was not so much what you said, as the manner of speaking it that struck me. I saw in you the beauty of holiness I never saw before." All of which is emphasized by these lines, written for us by Mr. J. Willis Baer: "What men want in these days in the church is something to send them out into the day to bear their burdens more easily and to help other people to live. 'Live and let live' is one motto; 'live and help live' is another. Let me quote what one man had to say recently: 'It isn't the minister's business to figure in the pulpit, but to be transfigured in it.' For, when there is more transfiguration in the pulpit, you will not find men figuring how to attract crowds."

Victoria, B. C.

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